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**Master's Thesis of Geography**

**Village involvement in the  
tourism-rural development nexus:  
A case study of Viet Hai, Vietnam**

**관광-농촌 개발 넥서스에 촌민의 참여:  
베트남의 비엠타이 (Viet Hai) 사례연구**

**August 2020**

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# **Village involvement in the tourism-rural development nexus: A case study of Viet Hai, Vietnam**

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# Abstract

The study examines local involvement in tourism activities and rural development in Viet Hai, a remote, rural commune of Vietnam. Rather than exploring community participation in tourism planning as other research, this thesis focuses on village engagement in tourism employment, in consideration of the process of rural development and rural transformation. Qualitative research methods were conducted, consisting of archival studies, direct participant observation at the village, and a total of 40 in-depth local interviews: 32 villagers, 3 local government officials, and 5 tourists. The fieldwork results reveal the following two main findings.

Firstly, in general, local community takes part in tourism activities in three different forms, namely direct involvement, indirect involvement and non-involvement. Although tourism has developed for almost 20 years, only a small number of local people and local households are considered as directly involved because they directly provide services for tourists such as accommodation and transportation. These directly involved households are members of a community-based tourism program (CBT) which was established to gather local tourism businesses together and encourage them to support each other. A majority of local people and local households in Viet Hai fall under indirect and non-involvement in tourism activities which reflects the low engagement in tourism employment in the village. The difference in geographical acting space (referring to external social networks) and bonding social capital under the form of family and kinship network (as pertaining to internal social networks) are more likely to be the determining factors that prevent the engagement of a majority of local villagers in tourism activities.

Secondly, tourism has offered both financial and non-financial benefits to local development, highlighting the role of tourism in diversifying rural occupation, rural income in the process of rural transformation. However, the benefits of tourism development are unequally distributed among local villagers, leading to the disparity of living standards between different groups in the village. Most of the benefits go to families directly involved in tourism activities through running their own businesses such as homestays, restaurants, and driver services. Meanwhile, local villagers who are not engaged in tourism activities or indirectly joining tourism, experience more vulnerability

due to unsustainable sources of income, lack of savings, and geographical isolation. These results raise concerns about inclusive development in rural areas in Viet Hai and other developing countries.

**Keyword:** *rural tourism, rural development, community-based tourism (CBT), geographical acting space, bonding social capital, kinship.*

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## **Abbreviations**

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
GSO – General Statistic Office of Vietnam  
IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development  
ILO - The International Labor Organization  
MARD - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development  
MOLISA - Minister of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs  
TITC - Tourism Information *Technology* Centre of Vietnam  
TSA - Vietnam Tourism Satellite Accounts  
UNWTO – World Tourism Organization, United Nations  
VNAT - Vietnam National Administration of Touris  
WB – The World Bank  
WTO - The World Tourism Organization  
WTTC - World Travel and Tourism Council  
GAS – geographical acting space

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1. Research background, research objectives, and research questions

Over decades, many developing countries have witnessed structural transformations occurring as the relocation of resources and economic activities across three sectors of agriculture, manufacturing, and services with the development of modern economic growth (Herrendorf et al. 2013). Among three sub-continent of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, Asian countries show the most similar path of structural transformation of developed countries with the decreasing share of the agricultural sector in GDP and increasing share of manufacturing and service sectors (Bah, 2010). A key feature of the region is the high share of industrial outputs. The process of structural transformation, in correlation with urbanization, modernization, and globalization, has led to considerable changes in socio-economic development in rural areas in developing countries since 1990.

Most rural areas in developing countries undergo net out-migration to urban areas, resulting in faster growth in urban population than that in rural areas. According to FAO<sup>1</sup>, in the developing world, while the urban population accounted for only 22 percent (460 million people) in 1960, up to 49 percent of the population (3 billion people) in these countries lived in cities and towns by 2015. In the same period, the rural population had slower growth from 1.6 billion in 1960 to 3.1 billion people in 2015. The internal migration from rural to urban areas mostly relates to labor market adjustment from agriculture to manufacturing and services, which plays an essential role in the urbanization process.

Apart from urban transition by rural-urban migration, rural communities in developing countries have experienced rural transformation which implies growth of agriculture productivity, rising commercialization and marketable surpluses, variation of production patterns and livelihoods, expansion of decent non-farm employment and entrepreneurial opportunities (IFAD, 2016). This nature of rural transformation is considered a segment of the structural transformation process characterized by the interrelation between agriculture, rural non-

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1042091/icode/>. Accessed June 10, 2020

farm economy, manufacturing, and services. There is a process called “agrarian transition” in rural Southeast Asia where people are reducing their dependence on agriculture and farming while seeking to diversify their economies with “off-farm” activities and alternative resources to have more chances to be a part of new markets (Cramb et al. 2009; Eder 1999; Rigg 2005, 2006).

Indeed, the increasingly important role of non-farm economic activities in rural areas of Southeast Asia as well as other developing countries can be illustrated by the rapid growth of income from rural non-farm employment. For example, in the 1990s and 2000s, non-farm income shared 37 percent, 47 percent, and 51 percent in total household income of Africa, Latin America, and Asia, respectively (Haggblade et al., 2007). Rural citizens diversify their economic activities by spanning forestry, natural resource extraction, food and non-food manufacturing, tourism, and services, including retail trade. In this context, many developing countries follow the trends from more developed countries in the western world of considering tourism as a key driver to achieve economic, socio-cultural development in rural and isolated communities (Odendaal and Schoeman, 1990; Binns and Nel, 2002; Rogerson, 2011, 2012; Yanes et al., 2019). While tourism made up for 10% of GDP in Western countries, it was up to 40% in emerging nations (Sofield et al., 2004) which illustrates tourism has been truly of paramount importance in the developing world.

Generally, tourism has rapidly expanded and showed its power as an engine for economic growth through transferring income, capital, and labor from urban, industrial, and developed regions to non-industrial areas since the early 1950s (Lane, 1994). The contributions of tourism to the improvement of rural life are recognized in the postmodern world whereby the functions of rural regions are not only the agricultural commodity production but also the sites of recreation, tourism, leisure, specialty food production, consumption and e-commerce (Saxena et al., 2007). Many tourists became interested in tranquil and peaceful places in rural areas in the nineteenth century and after that, in the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and present times, the new rural tourism has emerged with increasing numbers of visitors.

Particularly, The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2002) stated the considerable potential for the growth of tourism in many developing countries. Rural tourism is seen as a

provider of opportunities for individuals and micro-enterprises to sell additional products or services to the potential customers. Furthermore, rural areas in many developing countries use tourism as a tool to diversify livelihoods, generate new sources of income and employment, as well as reduce poverty (Mafunzwaini and Hugo, 2005; Telfer and Sharpley, 2007; Saarinen et al., 2009; Rogerson, 2012). In the same line, UNWTO continues to point out the direct and indirect contribution of tourism to gain the overall goal of sustainable development in the recent 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

Instead of mass tourism which indicates the large numbers of people looking for relevancy to their cultural holidays in popular resort destinations, “alternative” forms of tourism became more popular to achieve the goals of sustainable development in many countries. Alternative forms of tourism are often characterized by “their smaller scale, the involvement of local people, a preference for remote areas and a predilection to place enjoyment of nature, landscape and cultures at the center of the tourism experience” (Williams, 1998). In other words, alternative tourism primarily focuses on decreasing the negative impacts of mass tourism on the environment and society, boosting other sectors of the local economy such as agriculture, and raising the involvement of local people in the process of decision-making and development. Alternative tourism consists of many subcategories, such as ecotourism, pro-poor tourism, and community-based tourism. Alternative tourism and rural tourism, therefore, are interconnected for the goal of sustainable development in rural areas in the developing world.

Like other developing nations, the economy of Vietnam has experienced a structural transformation from an agriculture-based economy to the dominance of services. According to the latest update from GSO (2019), the service sector shared the largest proportion of GDP at 41.64% while agriculture and manufacturing had smaller shares at 13.96% and 34.49%, respectively. The rest of 9.91% were the taxes minus subsidies on production. Considering tourism as an indispensable component of the sector of services, the Vietnamese Government and the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT) are focusing on a long-term plan to diversify the tourism industry and increase foreign exchange into the country. Indeed, the role of the tourism sector is increasingly important in Vietnam’s economy. The share of tourism in

Vietnam's GDP increased from 6% in 2013 to 7.9% in 2017 (WTTC, 2018). Moreover, the number of workers in the tourism sector also rose from 450,000 in 2013 to 750,000 workers (occupied 1.4 percent of Vietnam's total employment) in 2017 (ITDR, 2017).

In the World Economic Forum's (WEF) latest 2017 Tourism Competitiveness Index, Vietnam ranked third in Southeast Asia, followed by Indonesia and Thailand in terms of its natural and cultural resources. Not only for national economic development, tourism is also set as one of the fundamental vehicles for economic development and poverty reduction for more than 60% of the rural population in Vietnam. This function of tourism was early introduced in Vietnam's Law on Tourism in 2005 as follows:

“...in remote and isolated areas and in areas with socio-economic difficulties where there are tourism potentials to make use of the labor force, goods and services in the spot, contributing to raising local people's intellectual level and to hunger elimination and poverty reduction”

**(GOV, 2005, p. 9)**

The increasingly essential role of rural tourism in rural and isolated areas in Vietnam is also mentioned in the Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2011-2020, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) in 2009. So far, despite the term “rural tourism”, it has not officially been introduced in legal documents, and various forms of tourism development have been established in many rural regions in Vietnam, such as the handicraft-village tourism at the bronze foundry villages at Ngu Xa (Ha Noi); Dai Bai (Bac Ninh); Ecotourism in the birds garden (Ca Mau, Bac Lieu, Dong Thap, etc.), in Tram Chim Ramsar sites (Tram Chim national park in Dong Thap); Culinary tourism or food tourism in Tay Nguyen, Hoa Binh (making ruou can wine), Pia cake (Soc Trang); or agritourism in the Northern mountainous provinces (Pham and Vu, 2017). Among many rural, remote areas where tourism is prioritized in local, rural development, Viet Hai can be seen as a typical example.

Viet Hai is located on the east coast of Cat Ba island. Because local people use “Viet Hai commune”, “Viet Hai village” or Viet Hai interchangeably, in this research, all of three terms refer to the similar case. The commune is home to 285 residents and 95 households (Viet Hai People's Committee, 2019). Like other rural areas in Vietnam,

tourism in Viet Hai is characterized by nature-based tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, and cultural tourism. Tourism in Viet Hai has a close relation with tourism development in Cat Ba island which makes up the Southeastern edge of Lan Ha Bay in Northern Vietnam, maintaining dramatic and rugged features of Ha Long Bay. Ha Long Bay is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a well-known travel destination in Quang Ninh province, Vietnam. However, despite tourism having been developed in this isolated commune for almost twenty years, it is only visited by an increasing number of tourists recently due to the engagement of tour operators and tourism companies. To set tourism as one of the main goals to reach the further success of the rural revitalization of the region, the local government has introduced some programs in the commune, such as community-based tourism program (CBT). Still, Viet Hai is in the beginning stages of implementing and achieving the success of rural tourism like other rural regions in Vietnam and developing countries.

Community participation (CP) is considered one of the most elements of the bottom-up initiatives in rural areas. CP is usually mentioned in close relation to the decision-making process of the community. As such, in tourism studies, there is a rich number of research that examines CP in tourism planning with corresponding topologies, for instance Arnstein (1969), Choguill (1996), Chok and Macbeth (2007). However, local people participate in tourism in not only policy formulation, but also in tourism employment. In other words, rural people get involved in tourism as employees in the tourism industry who directly or indirectly serve and get benefits from tourists. Examining local participation in tourism employment is important because in many developing countries, including Vietnam, tourism is considered an effective tool to diversify occupations and sources of income, leading to improved local welfare and rural development (Ladkin, 2011; IFAD, 2016).

The number of research on local participation in tourism employment is relatively poor (Cukier-Snow and Wall, 1993; Xiao and Smith, 2006; Ladkin, 2011). Most previous research on tourism employment seems to be conducted through the lens of economists, rather than geographers. Additionally, there is precious little research looking at linkages between tourism employment geographical acting space (GAS) as well as kinship, which reflects the ability of people to

use various channels to get involved in tourism employment and improve their well-being. Reviewing literature from previous studies of tourism, rural tourism, and sustainable tourism, it is more likely that there is a scarcity of research on tourism in a remote, rural case study of developing countries such as Vietnam. This research thus aims to fill these gaps by seeking the local involvement in tourism via employment in the case study of Viet Hai. In order to make it clearer, instead of the term “community participation”, the term “local community involvement/ engagement in tourism” will be utilized in the whole research with focus on involvement in tourism employment. The results of the thesis are expected to have both theoretical and empirical contributions in the field of rural geography and development in Viet Hai, as well as other areas. Furthermore, the outcomes are anticipated to diversify the case study of tourism in rural, remote areas.

To accomplish the aforementioned research purposes, the present study sets two main research questions:

- 1) How do local people get involved in tourism activities in Viet Hai?*
- 2) How does tourism contribute to local, rural development in Viet Hai?*

The first research question focuses on local involvement in tourism employment of Viet Hai. This question has two components, one is the forms of community involvement in tourism activities and another one is factors that cause local people to get engaged in tourism. The second question is directly linked to the first. It explores how tourism contributes to local development in Viet Hai based on the outcome of questioning community engagement in tourism employment.



## **1.2. Research methods**

Analyses expressed in the present research draw upon a variety of qualitative research methods, including site visits, semi-structured, in-depth interviews, participation observation, and archival studies. By using these research techniques, secondary and primary data were generated to accomplish the research purposes. Qualitative research methods have been utilized in plenty of studies in geography, especially during the late twentieth century, and the research methods in human geography have steadily shifted from quantitative to qualitative research (Hay, 2010). The increasing popularity of qualitative methods in human geography research derives from the fact that this method can help human geography researchers to address two fundamental questions relating to either social structures or with individual experiences in geography.

Secondary data is data that has already been collected by someone for their specific purposes. The way researchers review the literature of previous studies is also based on secondary data. Normally, the available data can be found from many published or unpublished sources such as books, records, biographies, newspapers, published censuses or other statistical data, data archives, Internet articles, research articles, and databases. In this study, secondary data was mostly obtained from either the Viet Hai People's Committee or the Internet. In particular, from the source of Viet Hai People's Committee, the researcher collected available documents related to the Viet Hai commune, namely demographic information, the socio-economic situation of Viet Hai, reports of tourism development and CBT programs in 2018 and 2019, poverty alleviation and thematic maps, i.e. administrative map, and land use maps.

From the Internet, the review of literature on rural transformation, rural development, local development, tourism development, and explanatory mechanism was mostly based on the available research on Google Scholar, Research Gate, etc. Besides this, government publications (such as policies and resolutions) related to rural transformation and tourism in rural and remote areas in Vietnam were also found on the Internet. The database used for this research is available from national and international offices, namely general statistics office of Vietnam, GSO ([gso.gov.vn](http://gso.gov.vn)), Vietnam National Administration of

Tourism, VNAT ([vietnamtourism.gov.vn](http://vietnamtourism.gov.vn)), World Bank (WB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Tourism Organization (WTO), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Analyzing these reports provides a profound background of rural transformation, tourism development, and local development from a large to small scope and scale. Also, in order to increase the visibility of the location of Viet Hai as well as the spatial distribution of some selected homestays and local facilities, Mapinfo Pro 15 was used to create two maps based on data from local government and the Internet.

The fieldwork was conducted over a 15-day-period at Viet Hai commune. Viet Hai was selected because of several reasons. Firstly, it is located in a rural and remote area of Cat Ba island, which relates it to the purpose of a diversifying case study of research on tourism. In 2017, the Prime Minister signed Decision 1859/ QĐ-TTg recognizing Viet Hai and other 11 communes and towns of Cat Hai district, Hai Phong city as an island commune. Additionally, tourism has developed for a long time and since 2018, the CBT program has been adopted in this rural and remote area. Viet Hai is still on its way to achieve the success of tourism and CBT in remote, rural areas like other isolated regions in Vietnam. The findings from Viet Hai with a core focus on tourism and rural, local development, therefore, is anticipated to apply in other cases of island communes in Viet Nam and other developing countries. This application demonstrates the transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 2002) in the qualitative research which defines the degree to which findings apply to other cases of the phenomenon in question. To obtain the transferability in qualitative research, researchers are required to have a careful selection of case study and useful theory that is neither too abstract nor too case-specific (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2003).

During the 15-day-fieldwork in Viet Hai from 30 December 2019 to 14 January 2020, a total of 40 semi-structured, in-depth interviews were carried out by using random and non-random snowballing/chain-referral-sampling techniques. By walking around the village, the researcher randomly met interviewees, mostly at their houses. Then, new interviewees were recruited through the recommendation of previous participants among their acquaintances to the researcher. To stick to the principle of research ethics, rather than the real name of interviewees,

numbers such as interviewee L1, interviewee L2 are used in this research when it mentions each interviewee.

The number of interviewees (40) is determined based on the concept of “saturation point” in qualitative research when no new information is discovered in data analysis, and the researcher can stop collecting data after recognizing this redundancy. A semi-structured interview is organized around ordered but flexible questioning, allowing respondents to freely share their thoughts. In case it moved too far from the research topic, the researcher redirected the conversation. Besides, in-depth interviews are not only asking questions but also systematically recording and documenting the responses to probe for deeper meaning and understanding (Hay, 2010). Using semi-structured, in-depth interviews allows interviewees to give more information about what was not originally designed in the list of questions but can be useful for the research objective. For example, the problem of land ownership issues is not initially included in the interview. However, it was revealed by a significant number of interviewees. These respondents therefore could freely share their opinion on this issue.

The interviewees were divided into 3 different groups: 32 local villagers; 2 local government officials and 1 local community leader; and 5 tourists. Each interview was carried out at a convenient time and place. All of the interviews were recorded by phone and note-making with the permission of participants. The duration of an interview varied from 15 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes, depending on the time budget of interviewees, especially for local people who were doing tourism activities such as homestays, restaurants as they usually do not have much time to talk. Interviews with villagers, local government, community leaders, and one Vietnamese tourist were carried out in Vietnamese and were later translated into English. Meanwhile, English was used to communicate with all four international tourists. 3 separated lists of interview questions were designed for the 3 groups.

Since local involvement in tourism activities and local development are the main objectives of this study, local villagers were the majority of respondents (See basic information of local interviewees in table 5.1). In general, among 32 local villagers, there were 23 females (71.9%) and 9 people were male (28.1%). The age gap of local village interviewees ranged from the early 30s to the late 80s. The 80-year-old participants were interviewed because they have been living in Viet Hai

for a long time and they have an important role in tourism development in Viet Hai. 11 of the 32 local village participants are members of CBT program, accounting for 34.4% of total interviewees. 59.4% of interviewees (19 interviewees) were involved in tourism activities under various forms such as homestay owner, worker and vegetable provider. The remaining numbers (40.6%) were doing other economic activities such as local official in the Viet Hai People's Committee, teacher or farmer. A majority of interviewees had lived in the village since they were born while the others had moved to Viet Hai and stayed longer than 20 years. Only 1 participant had lived in the village for less than 5 years.

In order to identify the village involvement in tourism activities and the allocation of benefits to local development, 32 local interviewees were asked main questions about their perception of the overall development of tourism in the region (e.g. period of development, characteristics of tourists, tourism seasons, advantages and disadvantages of Viet Hai to develop tourism), their current and previous occupation, the reasons why they are engaged in tourism (or not), the tourism-related activities in the region and relevant percentage of local people doing these jobs, how tourism has changed their life and other local people in both economical and non-economical impacts, the difference between local people (households) who are working on tourism and those do not, what they think about the support from governments, NGOs, and their recommendations to tourism development. Additionally, local people were asked to compare the current development of tourism to that over 20 years ago; the difference between local people/households who take part in tourism and who do not participate in tourism.

Three local government officials participated in the interview, including: One male local government official who has been the vice president of Viet Hai People's Committee since 2019; one male official who has been a member of People's Council, responsible for culture and policy of Viet Hai for 10 years, and a female community leader since 2019. Apart from several questions that have the same focus on tourism development, local involvement and benefits from tourism, the local government officials were asked additional questions on the policies that have been implemented to foster tourism development and their recommendations to higher levels of the administrative unit of Cat Hat district and Hai Phong city.

There were only 3 local government officials interviewed because Viet Hai is a small village with a small number of government officials, and 2 among the 32 local people who took part in the interview can be considered as local government officials as well. However, as local development is the main core of research, these respondents are counted as local villagers. Furthermore, these “double role” interviewees, apart from answering the list of questions for local villagers, sometimes mentioned information related to their work at Viet Hai People’s Committee, which can be used to clarify the answers provided from other local governments. For example, when the Vice Chairman of the Viet Hai People’s Committee was asked about the program of NGOs in the region, he said it was operated a long time ago and he had no information about it. The issue of lack of information then can be addressed by the answer from one of the interviewees who is the president of Viet Hai People’s Council. He reported that the program of FFI – an NGO in Viet Hai in the past supported local people in sending them off to learn from other regions that succeed in tourism development, such as Sa Pa, Mai Chau.

A small number of tourists participated in the interview because they contribute to local tourism development through the tourism receipts. These tourists were from different countries: 1 male Dutch man, 1 Indian woman, 1 German man, 1 Vietnamese woman, and 1 Colombian woman. Two of them bought a package tour that includes Viet Hai as a destination while the rest came by independent travels. Their ages ranged from the 30s to the 50s. These tourists answered questions that center on how they knew Viet Hai as a tourism destination, their activities in Viet Hai, what they think about tourism services in the village, and their recommendations to tourism in the commune.

### **1.3. Organization of thesis**

The thesis is organized into six chapters, including the introduction in the first part.

Chapter 2 is divided into three smaller parts, comprising the linkage between tourism and rural development; explanatory variables: geographical acting space (GAS) and bonding social capital in the form of family and kinship network; and finally, analytical framework. This chapter provides the theoretical concepts of tourism and rural development related terms from different perspectives of other

researchers. The analytical framework explains how the ideas of this thesis are arranged.

Chapter 3 introduces the case study of the research. Firstly, it will analyze the broader case of rural tourism in Vietnam, which gives readers a wider view of the national context. After that, the location, geography, socio-economic characteristics, and an overview of tourism development in Viet Hai will be presented respectively.

In chapter 4, specific results of the research on community involvement in tourism in Viet Hai will be revealed. There are two sub-parts, including the different forms of community participation in tourism activities in the first part and then a mechanism of explanatory variables is used to explain the ability to get involved in tourism of Viet Hai villagers in the second part.

Chapter 5 shows the findings of the study on the contributions of tourism to local development in Viet Hai village. It consists of four sections. The first section will examine the effectiveness of CBT in Viet Hai; the second part focuses on economic contribution of tourism while the third part will have a closer look at the non-economic benefits. The final section in this chapter will focus on the growing disparity among villagers.

Chapter 6 includes two main sections which are key findings, contributions and policy recommendations of the study in the first section; followed by further discussions and future research in section two.

## **Chapter 2 Rural development and tourism relationship**

### **2.1. The linkage between tourism and rural development**

#### **2.1.1. Rurality**

There are many different ways to define the concept of rurality itself. Since the main focus of this research is tourism in rural areas, it is reasonable to utilize the definition of rurality given by Lane (1994) because in this definition, it is closely connected with tourism development. According to Lane, the concept of “rurality” is defined through three major facets, namely: population density and settlement size; the “traditional” social structures and issues of community identity and heritage; and the dominance of agriculture and forestry in land use and economy.

Particularly, rural areas are characterized by low population densities and the small size of settlements, usually less than 10,000 habitats although it can vary between countries. From the aspect of “escapism” (Plog, 1991), researchers should take these features into account while examining tourism development because it underlines the trends of tourists moving from populous places to quiet, tranquil places on their holiday. In the second facet of rurality, although it is tricky to exactly define the characteristics of rural society because it exists in different forms between countries and continents and even within countries. Lane adapted the traditional social structures of rural areas from Frankenberg (1966) as he makes a comparison between rural and urban societies. According to him, rural society is illustrated by simple economies, the community, the economic class is one of several divisions, social fields involving few but multiple role relationships, role embracement, different social roles played by the same person, close-knit networks, education according to status, little division of labor, ascribed status locals, conjunction and integration with working environments. Tourists, therefore, visit rural areas to experience the unique culture of rural areas. Similar to the opinion of Lane in the last characteristic of rurality, Ashley and Maxwell (2001) argued that a majority of rural areas, economic activities are mostly occupied by agricultural activities, including fields and pastures, woods and forest, water, mountain and desert. Additionally, besides agriculture and

forestry, the functions of rural areas as the sites of recreation, tourism, leisure, specialty food production, consumption, and e-commerce are recognized by Saxena et al. (2007).

### **2.1.2. Rural transformation**

There has been a widespread transformation over rural areas of many developing countries. The evolution of the concept of rural transformation can be seen during two periods: productivism from post-World War II to the 1970s and post-productivism which emerged in the 1980s. In the former period, the rural transformation was associated with the structural changes and urbanization in a country as the dominance of agriculture was eroded while the role of industry and services became more important. Agriculture in rural areas was modernized, especially with the green revolution or third agricultural revolution occurring between 1950 and the late 1960s that aimed to increase agricultural productivity worldwide, particularly in developing countries (Johnston and Mellor, 1961; Lipton, 1968; Schultz, 1968; Hayami and Ruttan, 1971). The rural transformation in Western countries was seen as a model of development in the Global South. Protectionism was the core of policy that aimed to motivate farmers to expand their food production, enhance food security, and gain self-sufficiency (Mackay and Perkins, 2009).

In the later period, post-productivism examined rural areas with separation from agriculture in the previous period. The key features of post-productivism are to reduce using intensive production methods, less dependence on chemical inputs and high-yielding varieties and increase the consideration to environmental conservation of farm and sustainable agriculture because of the increasing public awareness on environment, the increasing preference of consumers in organic food and pressure from globalization and neo-liberal economy (Mackay and Perkins, 2009). Neoliberal policies are the main focus of post-productivism, which removes interference of state to agricultural production to encourage economic growth and efficiency while integrating local primary production to global markets. Researchers and policy makers mostly focus on two areas of rural, including the unbeatable difficulties that small-scale farmers faced in modernized agriculture (e.g. Mazoyer and Roudart, 2006) and the community well-being in the Integrated Rural Development (IRD) which inspired new “area development” or “place-



based development” approaches of “community-driven development”, “territorial development” and “local development” after the mid-1980s

Early in the 1980s, Coffey and Polese (1984) defined the concept of local development in the context of a mixed market economy. The term “development” is understood as growth in real income per capita for a given region, which is associated with certain structural and social transformation. The term “local” is similar to “regional” and also, is closely related to “endogenous” or “native”. Therefore, local development is defined as a particular form of regional development in which local factors have the greatest contribution. This concept of local development is constructed based on three traditional pillars of regional theory and policy: migration and economic adjustment, the role of human and physical capital, and growth center approach. Local development is conceptualized in a four-stage model: the emergence of local entrepreneurship, the “take-off” of local enterprises, the expansion of these enterprises beyond local regions and the success of a regional economic structure that is based on local initiatives and locally created comparative advantages.

In the research on the definition of local development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Sekuła (2002) summarizes the main characteristics of local development as follows: local development is an ongoing process; it refers to territorial development rather than sector development; it relates to a local arrangement that brings mobilization of community, leading to a feeling of belonging to a community and place; the creativity, inventiveness of local community relies on local awareness; it implies the autonomous development; it should be created by different actors, and local governments have an undeniable role in local development.

Recently, Afrodita (2015) defined local development using five aspects, including: the territorial dimension; the solidarity and initiatives of the community (i.e. partnership between the public and private sector); the dependence on both endogenous and exogenous forces (interregional and cross-border); integration of economic (i.e. creation, accumulation and redistribution of wealth), social (i.e. improvement of life quality), cultural and environmental (protection), political (revitalization of local democracy) dimensions; and the opposition to exclusion mechanisms through adapting and autonomous initiatives to the great changes of the global economy. Afrodita (2015) argues that all five aspects of local development strongly correlate to local autonomy with the core of

decentralization in that local development diversifies activities in a certain area, by mobilizing existing resources and energies in the area (Matei and Anghelescu, 2009). Each aspect is illustrated by relevant research. The territorial dimension is examined in the work of Parent et al. (2009). He defines local development as “a process of diversification and enrichment of the economic and social activity on a territory by mobilizing and coordinating its resources and energies (Parent et al., 2009). The relationship between the public and private sector is examined in the research conducted by Profiroiu et al. (1998) in which local development is defined as “an economic intervention strategy, by which the local representatives of the public and private sector, cooperate for the development of human, technical and financial resources of a community, associated within a sectoral or cross-sectoral structure of public or private activity, aimed at creating new jobs”. The municipalities, inter-communal, inter-regional, cross-border context of local development is recognized by Matei and Anghelescu (2009).

Rural transformation is a proactive and positive process of change and development in the national and global context of social and economic changes (Long et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2013). It subsumes the core ideas of rural development in the sense of improving the well-being of rural people through increasing their productive capacities, giving them more opportunities in life, and implementing more supportive policies for the poor. Many researchers advocate the continuity and longer-term nature of rural transformation processes. In this sense, rural transformation is an ongoing phenomenon and these rural processes are connected to national and global dynamics. Julio Berdegúe gives the concept of rural transformation by taking rural societies as a starting point: “Rural transformation is a process of comprehensive societal change whereby rural societies diversify their economies and reduce their reliance on agriculture; become dependent on distant places to trade and to acquire goods, services, and ideas....”<sup>2</sup>

The rural development report 2016 of IFAD provided the latest concept of rural transformation that is suitable to the current situation of rural areas in many regions in the world. According to IFAD (2016), rural transformation consists of increased agricultural productivity, a rise in commercialization, and diversification in productivity patterns and

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<sup>2</sup> Global Donor Platform for rural development

livelihoods. Expanded decent off-farm employment, entrepreneurship, policy influence, services, and infrastructure access are also involved in rural transformation, and these lead to improved and sustainable rural growth. Rural transformation is examined through several factors such as the unconsciousness of transformation background (Ombeni and Deguchi, 2009; Park and Kim, 2011; Pudianti et al., 2014); the cultural factor within rural areas (Pudianti, et, al, 2015) and educational factors of rural transformation (Wang, et, al. 2013). Parallel to the concept of rural transformation, the concepts of commodification of the countryside, livelihood diversification, and rural non-farm economy are considered important elements of the rural transformation process. In addition to the concept of rural transformation, IFAD (2016) also provided a new concept of inclusive rural transformation that refers to the process in which all rural people have their own chance to gain their economic, social and political rights and acquire their abilities. As a result, inclusive rural transformation can include all people in rural society, especially those who are disadvantaged and poor, including small-scale farmers, land poor and landless workers, women and youth, victims of disasters and conflicts, and marginalized ethnic and racial groups.

Rural transformation is only one part of a larger process of structural transformation shaped by the interconnection between agriculture, the rural nonfarm economy, and manufacturing services (Timmer, 2014). Structural transformation has four major elements, including, increase in industrial and service output and urbanization of employment and economic activity; contribution of agriculture to economic output; reduced unemployment; the falling death rates by improved health services and nutrition that results in the growth of population before the formulation of a new equilibrium (Timmer, 2008). Several East Asian states such as China, Vietnam, and South Korea are experiencing quick structural transformation (Timmer, 2014).

Haggblade et al. (2007) pointed out that “the rural nonfarm economy has grown too large to ignore”. In particular, 30 to 35 percent of rural incomes came from nonfarm economic activities in the developing world. Nonfarm or nonagricultural production is defined as all of the economic activities (i.e. mining, manufacturing, utilities, construction, commerce, transport, financial, and personal services) besides primary agricultural commodities (Haggblade et al., 2007). It is necessary to clarify the slight difference between rural nonfarm income

and off-farm income. According to Haggblade et al. (2007), while nonfarm income is derived from nonfarm economic activities, off-farm income consists of both incomes from nonfarm economy and wage earnings from agriculture (i.e., the farmers may sell their land and earn wages on other people's farms). The expansion of economic liberalization beginning in the 1990s is considered to be the most important driver to have opened up the rural nonfarm economy as never before (Haggblade et al., 2007). By the same token of rural non-farm economy, the concept of commodification of the countryside also points out the transformation in rural areas in the sense of growing commodification of non-agriculture commodities, for example, rural culture, places, landscapes for tourism, leisure, and recreational purposes.

“Livelihood diversification of rural economy” in the process of rural transformation refers to the decline in farm activities of rural economic activities while expanding non-farm economy in rural areas (Start, 2001). Furthermore, “individual or household diversification” mentions the increasing number of sources of rural individual's income or household regardless of the sector or location. Rural livelihood diversification and rural transformation are examined in specific areas, such as in sub-Saharan Africa. Bryceson (1996) used the term *deagrarianization* to describe the process of transformation that is characterized by a decrease in the agricultural sector and an increase in economic diversification in rural regions. In Latin America, Kay (2008) also investigates rural transformation in consideration of diversification of rural economic activities related to the neoliberal shift in globalization and development strategies. In Southeast Asia, the so-called “agrarian transition” is used to describe the reduction of rural people's dependence on agriculture and farming practices while seeking to diversify their economies with the “off-farm” activities and alternative resources to have more chances to participate in new markets (Eder 1999; Rigg 2005, 2006; Cramb et al., 2009).

Livelihood diversification is considered to be the maintenance and continuous adaptation of a highly diverse portfolio of activities over time, an active social process of individuals or household diversification. Livelihood diversification, therefore, is believed to positively impact rural development through increasing security and improving life quality for rural people (Ellis, 2000). In this context, many rural communities in

the developing world have started to get engaged in tourism employment, which is believed to bring more occupational opportunities to local people. In other words, to a certain extent, diversifying rural livelihood through participation in tourism has impacted on rural development.

### 2.1.3. Rural development

The term rural development has many definitions and interpretations, depending on several factors. Pain and Hansen (2019) explain the concept of rural development in two ways, either reflecting the goal-oriented practices of intentional development (Escobar, 2012) or an immanent process of social changes that have their own logic, drivers, momentum and effects (Cowen and Shenton, 1998). Over twenty years ago, there was a change in researchers' interest from an almost exclusive focus on the sociology of agriculture to extensive engagement with discussion on rural development. Particularly, Lowe et al. (2019) divided research models on rural development into three models, which are illustrated in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1. Three models of Rural Development**

	<b>Top down (or exogenous)</b>	<b>Bottom up (or endogenous)</b>	<b>Networked (or neo- endogenous)</b>
<b>Key principle</b>	Economics of scale and concentration  (Cochrane, 1979; Chambers et al., 1989; Buttel et al., 1990; Lowe, 2010)	Harnessing local (natural, human and cultural) resources for sustainable development  (van der Ploeg and Long, 1994; Lowe et al., 1998)	Identifying and exploiting the place-based potential of localities; social-spatial justice (Lowe et al., 1995; Gkartzios and Scott, 2014)
<b>Dynamic forces</b>	Urban growth poles (Buttel et al., 1990)	Local initiative and enterprises (Norgaard, 1992)	Local-global networks and urban-rural flows, external interconnections through multi-scalar and sectoral

			governance (Esparcia, 2014 )
<b>Functions of rural areas</b>	Production of food and primary products for expanding urban economies	Diverse service economies	A mosaic consumerists and (re-) emerging productivist functions (Gkartzios and Lowe, 2019 )
<b>Major rural development problems</b>	Low productivity and peripherality	Limited capacity of areas/ groups to participate in economic activity	Unequal relations between localities and external forces and institutions; Climate change and economic crises.
<b>Focus of rural development</b>	Agricultural modernization; encourage labor and capital mobility (Lowe et al, 1998)	Capacity-building (skills, institutions, infrastructure ); overcoming exclusion	Building local capacity to mobilize internal resources and respond to external pressures and opportunities
<b>Focus of rural development research</b>	Agricultural economics; Keynesian economic models and positivism	Rural sociology and rural geography; interpretive approaches and case study research	Action and activist research with communities; inter/transdisciplinary
<b>Source of knowledge</b>	Scientific research and external experts (Murdoch and Clark, 1994: p.124)	Local community	Placed based “vernacular expertise” (Dove and Kammen (2001; Donovan and Gkartzios, 2014)

**Source: Adapted from Lowe et al. (2019)**

Major themes in rural development have changed from the 1950s to 2010s (table 2.2). In the practice of rural south, over time, the focus of rural development has moved from economic growth through rising

production of agriculture to more social dimensions. Since the 1970s, the World Bank (1975) has provided the concept of rural development, starting with wider policy thinking than only agricultural development, focusing on rural poverty reduction. Similarly, in the context of an applied economics approach towards people and resources in rural areas, Jansma et al. (1981) generally defined rural development as an overall improvement in the economic and social well-being of rural people and the institutional and physical environment.

Therefore, the level of welfare of rural residents is the focus of rural development. This research applies the aforementioned definition of rural development from IFAD because this definition includes the main points of previous definitions and it is appropriate for the current situation in many rural areas. According to IFAD (2016), rural development involves the process of improving the opportunities and well-being of rural people. The characteristics of rural societies are changed and instead of focusing only on economic development, it is widely related to agricultural development, human development, social, and environmental objectives. Thus, rural development includes health, education and other social services. Besides this, it applies a multisector approach for developing agriculture, extracting minerals, tourism, recreation, and niche manufacturing.

**Table 2.2. Evolving themes in rural development 1950s-2010s**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Theme and focuses</b>
1950s	Modernization, dual-economy
1960s	Transformation and rational peasants, the Green Revolution
1970s	Integrated rural development, redistribution with growth
1980s	Free markets, retreat of the state, Food security and famine analysis, rural development as process
1990s	Poverty reduction, microcredit, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), environment and sustainability
2000s - 2010s	Sustainable livelihoods, good governance, sector-wide approaches, poverty eradication, Millennium Development Goals (MGDs), entrepreneurship and value chains, basic services, social protection, adaptation to climate change, Sustainable development goals (SDGs).

**Source: Adapted from Pain and Hansen (2019)**

As mentioned earlier, in the context of rural transformation of many developing countries, tourism plays a rising essential role in developing rural areas, especially in terms of generating new occupation for females and impacting on the sociology of the rural family due to the unemployment rate in rural areas being high for women (Bouquet and Winter, 1987).

#### **2.1.4. Tourism**

Among many definitions of tourism, the concept of tourism provided by the World Tourism Organization's (WTO) is the most commonly used by literature on tourism because it allows researchers to measure the growth of tourism and make a comparison on a global scale (Shaw and Williams, 1994). According to WTO, "Any person residing within a country, irrespective of nationality, traveling to a place within this country other than his usual place of residence for a period of not less than 24 hours or one night for a purpose other than the exercise of a remunerated activity in the place visited. The motives for such travel may be (1) leisure (recreation, holidays, health, studies, religion, sports); or (2) business, family, mission, meeting" (WTO, 1981, p. 89). Later in 1994, a publication from WTO and UNSTAT (1994) presents the broader concept of tourism that can be used to analyze tourism between countries and within a country too. Tourism, therefore, includes "the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes.

Most research on tourism borrowed or adapted the framework from other fields of social science, including geography (Smith, 1988; Britton, 1991; Goeldner et al., 2000). From the geographical perspective, research on tourism is specialized within six major areas which are the spatial aspects of supply; the spatial aspects of demand; patterns of movements and flows; the impact of tourism, the geography resorts, and models of tourist space (Pearce, 1979). The interdisciplinary feature of geography allows geographers to research on a variety of themes. Williams and Bell (2003) provide a list of key questions in consideration of both tourism and geography, as follows:

- Under what conditions (physical, economic, social) does tourism develop, in the sense of generating both demands for travel and supplies of tourist facilities?



- Where does tourism develop and in what form? (The question of location may be addressed at a range of geographical scales whilst the question of what is developed focuses particularly upon provision of infrastructure.)
- How is tourism developed? (This question will address not just the rate and character of tourism development but also the questions of who are the developers.)
- Who are the tourists (defined in terms of their number, characteristics, travel patterns, etc.), and what are their motives?
- What is the impact of tourism upon the physical, economic, and socio-cultural environments of host areas?

Since this research is conducted from a geographical perspective, it takes all of these questions into account, especially the second, third, and fifth questions.

According to Khairil, et, al. (2009), tourism has been considered in relation to development theory that is derived from four subsets, namely: modernization, dependency, neo-liberalism, and alternative development in which modernization and neoliberal perspectives are implicit in many tourism research in both developing and developed countries. The main features of each subsets are given from the previous research of Khairil, et, al. (2009) and Harrison (2015) as follows:

Tourism is embedded in the context of modernization theory (the 1950s-1960s), resulting in the increasingly important role of tourism in increasing foreign exchange, GDP, capital, technology transfer, and jobs (Shaw and Williams, 1994). Dependency theory (the 1960s-1970s) suggests the situation in which core countries have enormous impacts on the development of tourism in peripheral countries. The great effect of tour operators on tourism in receiving countries was examined in the work of Shawn and William (1994). Many researchers criticize the strong reliance of developing countries on developed countries. For instance, Oppermann (1993) argues the deepened inequality within developing countries due to the enclave structure of tourism. Similar issues on net benefits of tourism to local development are explored in other research such as Wen and Tisdell (1997). Neo-liberalism (1970-1980s) is generally characterized by two key features, including the promotion of the free market and awareness of the effects of development on different cultures and societies (Sharpley 2009). Particularly, neo-liberalism has emerged in the developing world as a

result of the oil crisis and economic depression (Desforges, 2000; Milne and Ateljevic, 2001). However, neo-liberalism is considered an inadequate development model, similar to modernization theory. One of the challenges of neo-liberalism is environmentalism (Payne and Phillips 2010: 131–137). Although gender equality and poverty alleviation were mentioned in tourism research in this period, they are “low-level projects”, leading to the dismissal of “alternative tourism”.

Alternative development (the 1990s onward) centered on grassroots development, environmental consideration, linkage with globalization, poverty reduction, and the development “impasse” (Sharpley 2009). Since the 1970s, mass tourism has raised many questions about the impact of tourism's multinationals on economics, the physical impact of litter and vehicles, and the social impact of mass visitation on heritage and cultures. In this context, the concept of alternative tourism is considered a better form of tourism than “mass” tourism in developing countries (Britton and Clarke 1987; Weaver 1991). Sustainability is the most important aspect of alternative tourism with a deep concern for the environment and local development. One of the typical characteristics of alternative tourism is that “the tourists undertaking this type of tourism are often interested in a quite specific attraction, be it a particular animal, mountain, cultural site, or people”. Along with the ongoing process of rural development and rural transformation that focuses on diversification and localization in rural areas of developing world, tourism is expected to have a great contribution to the development of rural communities by varying economic activities, bring more jobs and income (Hjalager, 1996; WTO, 1996; Hall and Jenkins, 1998; Mafunzwaini and Hugo, 2005; Telfer and Sharpley, 2007; Saarinen et al., 2009; Rogerson, 2012). Rural tourism is a synonym of sustainable tourism development in the sense of the nature, scale, character, and ownership of tourism development, although the universal concept of sustainable development remains contested both generally and within the rural tourism context (Roberts and Hall, 2001).

Lane (2009) defines rural tourism as having the following features: small establishments; workers often live near to the workplace; tourism supports other interests; weak infrastructure; locally owned businesses; strong individual activity base; much open space; sparsely populated; settlements under 10,000; many outdoor activities; much part-time involvement in tourism; natural environment; some

farm/forestry involvement; personal guest relationships; local in the atmosphere; specialist appeal and niche marketing; often influenced by seasonal factors; few guests; amateur management; conservation/limits to growth; and ethic and many older buildings. Popular holiday activities in rural areas may include adventure' holidays/wilderness holidays, river and canal angling, cycling/cycle touring, horse riding, nature study in outdoor settings such as birdwatching, photography and so forth.

A large number of research has evaluated how tourism in the countryside can develop more sustainably when it fulfills the requirements of local communities. It shows that tourism offers benefits and at the same time, brings corresponding costs to local people. Tovar and Lockwood (2008) summarize the social impacts of tourism reported in the literature. Generally, the impacts of tourism on local communities are mostly explored in two main aspects of financial impacts and non-financial impacts. Tourism positively influences the local economy through creating more employment opportunities (Ap, 1990; Frederick, 1993; Lankford and Howard, 1994; Mason and Cheyne, 2000; Tasmania Together, 2006); increasing household income, especially for tourism-related business (Frederick, 1993; Williams and Lawson, 2001; Andereck et al., 2005); enhancing investment and development opportunities (Ap and Crompton, 1998; Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000; Northcote and Macbeth, 2005); and increasing local business profit and potential for new local business (Lankford and Howard, 1994; Ap and Crompton, 1998; Northcote and Macbeth, 2005). Apart from the financial benefits, tourism is believed to bring social and cultural sakes for local people, as it encourages public participation (Andereck et al., 2005; Tasmania Together, 2006); enhances pride in the area (Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000; Teye et al., 2002); leads to interaction with friends, relatives, neighbors (Brunt and Courtney, 1999; Mason and Cheyne, 2000; Tomljenovic and Faulkner, 2000; Northcote and Macbeth, 2005).

On the other hand, researchers criticize tourism on the grounds of negative impacts on the economy, society, and culture. For instance, Frederick (1993) and Michal Smith criticize tourism for its low-quality jobs for women, which are low-paying, have no advancement possibilities, are seasonal and increase land value, cost of infrastructure, and cost of living. Additionally, tourism raises concern on environmental problems such as the increase in litter, noise pollution, use of natural resource base by residents, and congestion (Ap and Crompton, 1998;

Frederick, 1993; Fredline et al., 2005). Furthermore, tourism also causes negative impacts on culture, such as the increase in social inequity (Teye et al., 2002; Fredline et al., 2005; Northcote and Macbeth, 2005); and increases in drug use/addiction (Northcote and Macbeth, 2005).

Apart from how tourism affects the local community, community participation is also seen as one of the popular research topics. “Community is a very elusive and vague term” (Salazar, 2012). Generally, community participation or community involvement is the key element of local rural development. The awareness of including local communities in most local activities is becoming increasingly important in both theoretical and empirical experiences. Within the literature on tourism, local people participate in tourism through a range of activities, for example, community participation in the decision-making process or tourism planning, community participation in benefit-sharing or local involvement in tourism employments. Among these forms of participation, previous literature shows that community participation in tourism planning has been investigated in countless research.

A wide range of typologies of community participation (CP) in tourism-related decision-making processes are proposed by different researchers (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007; Li, 2005; Li, 2004; Tosun, 2000; Chok and Macbeth, 2007). Arnstein (1969) can be recognized as one of the first authors who created an eight-rung ladder of CP from lowest to highest degrees of power distribution as follows: nonparticipation rungs (“therapy” and “manipulation”), Degrees of tokenism (*Informing - Consultation - Placation*), Degrees of citizen power (*Partnership - Delegated power - Citizen control*). In contrast, Choguill (1996) criticized that Arnstein’s ladder is not able to be applied in underdeveloped countries because it is too Western-biased, and then modified Arnstein’s result to a new hierarchy from the lowest degree to highest degree as follows: self-management – conspiracy – informing – diplomacy – dissimulation – conciliation – partnership – empowerment. Similarly, although community participation in policy formulation is a priority for local residents to receive benefits from tourism development, it is hard to see this in developing nations (Tosun, 2000; Kibicho, 2003; Li, 2005). Notably, the result of Li (2005) reveals that although local CP in the policy-making process is not active, local people in the case study of Sichuan Province, China still enjoy benefits from tourism development. A similar image can be seen in a non-democracy as

Vietnam, where the principal role of government in local development cannot be ignored when examining CP in tourism planning. However, it does not mean that local people do not have a chance to raise their voices. In fact, they can share their opinions, suggestions, and even complaints to the government mostly during local meetings. This is the case in Viet Hai village.

CP in policy formulation is investigated in consideration of many “alternative” forms of tourism, especially community-based tourism (CBT). According to Goodwin and Santilli (2009), CBT is understood as “tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit”. Local people are the main core of CBT, who directly control tourism and get benefits from tourism. The term “community” in “community-based tourism” is similar to the terms “co-operation and participation” (Kumar, 2005) and also the involvement of the whole community, especially disadvantaged or marginalized community members in tourism development (Tasci et al., 2013). However CP in tourism as well as in CBT has been examined in previous research with a doubt on its success. Taylor (1995) expresses criticism about the romanticism of communitarianism. Getz and Jamal (1994) believe that it is not successful because local people need to acquire much capital and skills to participate in tourism. Notably, Blackstock (2005) points out three failures of literature on CBT that makes the conceptualization of CBT become “naive and unrealistic”. Firstly, “it tends to take a functional approach to community involvement”. Secondly, CBT “tends to treat the host community as a homogeneous bloc”. Finally, “it neglects the structural constraints to local control of the tourism industry”.

Besides participation in tourism planning, the local community also takes part in tourism through employment (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). Ladkin (2011) stated that without a doubt, tourism can be considered an essential generator of jobs. Particularly, rural tourism has a great contribution to generate jobs (Speaking to Express Travel World, Tourism Minister, Ambika Soni, New Delhi). However, the research on CP in tourism employment seems to have received inadequate attention from researchers (Cukier-Snow and Wall, 1993; Xiao and Smith, 2006; Ladkin, 2011). In line with the previous analysis, it is reasonable to examine CP in tourism via employment in Viet Hai as the main core of this research. In order to distinguish the usual meaning of participation

in decision-making in the term “community participation”, this thesis utilizes “local involvement” to refer to the sense of participation in tourism employment.

## **2.2. Explanatory variables: geographical acting space (GAS) and bonding social capital under the form of family and kinship network**

An explanatory mechanism is used by Pain and Hansen (2019) to analyze the linkages between different parts of the development process in their book “Rural Development”. The explanatory mechanism comprises acting space; social trust/ capital; stratification; social institutions and organizations; kinship; ethnicity; gender; class and caste; intersectionality. In this study, the explanatory mechanism includes geographical acting space, bonding social capital under forms of family and kinship networks.

### **2.2.1. Geographical acting space (GAS) – external networks**

The original term of GAS is acting space or action space. Since this study is conducted from the geographical perspective, the author modifies the original term to the new one to focus on the geographical aspect of the term, particularly the spatial element.

The concept of acting space originally appeared in the field of social psychology in the mid-1940s under the name “action research” by Lewin (1963) when he realized existing problems in social actions. Lewin strongly believes that what is needed in action research are group decisions and commitment to improvement (Dickens & Watkins, 1999). According to Kemmis and McTaggart, (1988), the main purpose of action research is to “build communities of people committed to enlightening themselves about the relationship between circumstance, action, and the consequence of their own situation, and emancipating themselves from the institutional and personal constraints which limit their power to live their own legitimate . . . values” (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Dickens & Watkins, 1999).

Healey and Underwood (1978), in their research on “Professional ideas and planning practice”, before explaining their own ways to apply the concept of acting space, point out how the collective sense of action space is applied in various fields, such as the field of planning, behavioral geography, and organizational space. In the area of planning, although the concept of acting space has various names such as ‘action space’

(Healey and Underwood, 1978), action area (Ostrom, 1999) and ‘Room for maneuver’ (Tait, 2002), most of these concepts are utilized to see how planners act in a certain circumstance. In behavioral geography, the “dimensions of action space are defined as places in which activities can occur and resources are available for getting these” (Healey and Underwood, 1978).

In other words, the concept implies the individual’s subjective perception which is created by the contact between perceived chances and perceived difficulties. In terms of organizational space, Eldridge and Crombie merge subjective into objective by taking the notion of collectivity in the concept of acting space to mention “the influence within which an organization as a collectivity exists” (Eldridge and Crombie, 1974). Friend et al. (1974) uses the collectivity of the action space of a “policy system”, which denotes individuals in a range of groups regarding a common policy system. The relation between the individuals within relevant action space is analyzed. Meanwhile, Healey and Underwood (1978), examined action space as a social concept that stresses the collective aspects of the concept. Also, they pay their attention to both objective and subjective aspects of the concept. Finally, they consider both the actual and aspirational senses of the term. To sum up, in their way of defining acting space, “Given that action space is a social concept, the dimensions of a planner’s action space may be defined in terms of his relationships with other individuals and groups. To maintain or modify an action space, a planner may find himself trying to manipulate a variety of organizational resources controlled by individuals (or groups) with whom contact must be established and maintained”.

This research uses the concept of acting space that is also employed by Pain and Hansen (2019) in their book “Rural Development” because of two reasons. Firstly, they use their definition in the context of rural development in developing countries. Secondly, they define acting space by integrating the concept from perspectives of behavioral geography and perspective of planning and organizational space. According to them, acting space/ geographical acting space refers to “how structural conditions actually condition people’s ability to act” (Pain and Hansen, 2019). In other words, the concept of acting space involves how society influences structure or individuals as well as their freedom to act and shape agency or society. In this, people “use their

experiences and try to accomplish a better world for themselves through building alliances with others both through formal and informal channels. Through actions, social relationships are built and transformed and any social structure is dependent upon confirmation through how people maintain it through actions”. Actor perspectives are the main core of acting space as what was examined previously in the work of Max Weber (1947; 1949) and Giddens (1984).

Upon this definition, Giddens and Sutton (2014) research on actors’ actions within a structural framework that contains both constraints and opportunities. In this definition, it is clear that social networks can be considered as the main sense of acting space which is stated as the methods people use to build their “alliances” with others. In the context of the nexus between village involvement and tourism-rural development in the current study, geographical acting space (GAS) refers to how local people get engaged in tourism employment and raise their living standards and better their lives. They may utilize a wide range of different channels in order to expand their social network, to gain contact with many more people who can bring more chances for them to improve their well-being. Considering geographical acting space in remote areas, local people always try to find as many channels as possible to break the remoteness and connect with the outside world. The term “remoteness” in this sense refers to “the distance from the places where structures, populations, and activities of modern civilization are concentrated (settlements, roads, etc)” (Boller et al., 2010).

## 2.2.2. Bonding social capital: kinship and family network

**Table 2.3. Different forms of capital**

<b>Forms of capital</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Monetary assets and resources that offer opportunities to invest in other activities
<b>Built</b>	Physical infrastructure including transport, building and public facilities that support communal activities
<b>Natural</b>	The services and resources provided by natural environments/ecosystems
<b>Human</b>	The assets and resources individuals have to use based on their health, skills, knowledge abilities and access to other forms of capital



<b>Political</b>	Access to, and influence on power systems, decisions and political representatives
<b>Cultural</b>	Stock of values, arts, crafts, cultural knowledge, performance and access to heritage resources
<b>Social</b>	Quality and quantity of social connections between people

**Source: Emery and Flora (2006); McGehee et al. (2010)**

Flora (1997) believes that each community owns a unique mix of the various forms of capital based on its residents. There is a debate on the decisive role of each capital in the development of each community. While some researchers, Flora (2004) for example, believe that there is a close linkage between the certain context of each communities and corresponding mixes of different, others show their preference for the balance of five major forms of capital, i.e. natural, financial, physical, human, and social capital (Dasgupta, and Serageldin, 2000). In tourism studies, Flora and other tourism researchers (e.g. Fallon and Kriwoken, 2003; Karlsson, 2005; Macbeth, Carson, and Northcote 2004) unravel the crucial role played by social capital among seven capitals. Jones (2005) states how trust (i.e. one of elements of social capital) impacts on tourism development as follows: “trust and reciprocity lubricate cooperation through reducing transaction costs, as people no longer have to invest in monitoring the behavior of others, thus building confidence to invest in collective or group activities”.

Generally, there is no universal definition of social capital since there are various ways to understand social capital. Paldam and Svendsen (2000) mention “density of trust”, and Coleman (1988) “the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations”. Because of this complexity, it is better to identify what social capital involves (Derek R. Hall, 2004). At the societal level, social capital is a public good that is the collective action, social participation, and quality of groups that form governance (Mateju, 2002). Meanwhile, at an individual level, social capital is a private good that includes an individual’s ability to create and maintain social connections and networks. The initial CONSCISE Project<sup>3</sup> defines social capital as

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<sup>3</sup> CONSCISE Project: The Contribution of Social Capital in the Social Economy to Local Economic Development in Western Europe; [www.conscise.info](http://www.conscise.info) and [www.conscise.mdx.ac.uk](http://www.conscise.mdx.ac.uk).

capital that “consists of resources within communities which are created through the presence of high levels of trust, reciprocity and mutuality, shared norms of behavior, shared commitment and belonging, both formal and informal social networks, and effective information channels, which may be used productively by individuals and groups to facilitate actions to benefit individuals, groups and the community more generally”. There is an interconnection between these aforementioned six elements of social capital. Also, these six elements are classified into three groups, including effective information channels which allow individuals and organizations to access information from outside and within their community; trust, social networks and reciprocity/mutuality, referring to the relationships between individuals and organizations’ and shared norms of behavior and shared commitment and belonging implying more than one individual and/or organization sharing values and sharing a way of thinking.

Through network views developed by Woolcock and Narayan (2000), social capital is divided into bonding social capital and bridging social capital (Larsen et al. 2004; Putnam 1993). The former refers to internal networks, trust and relationships that occur “horizontally” (Putnam 1993) while the latter occurs “vertically” between a community and outsiders for the purpose of aid and support. The important role of bridging social capital is examined in the work of Baker and Coulter (2007) and the relationship between bridging and bonding capital in the context of tourism is present in the research of McGehee, et, al. (2009).

Kinship is a collective institution of social capital, which is one of the essential factors of social organization in many Asian countries, such as the Philippines and Vietnam (Falco and Bulte, 2011). Two main features of kinship networks are a very developed form of social capital and strong, stable, and trustful social ties. Kinship usually implies “blood relationships”, which defines obligations for its members (Pain and Hansen, 2019). Therefore, kinship has a different notion of friendship networks that are characterized by voluntary and reciprocity. Upon this notion, Scott (1976) and Platteau (1991) explore the so-called “moral economy” based on kinship relations and the so-called “social constraint” in an extended family given by Hoff and Sen (2006). Each member of kinship helps out other members when they are in trouble because of the custom and norms in moral obligations. In line with this, Fortes (1969) underlines the “sharing without reckoning”, and Gulliver (1971) states

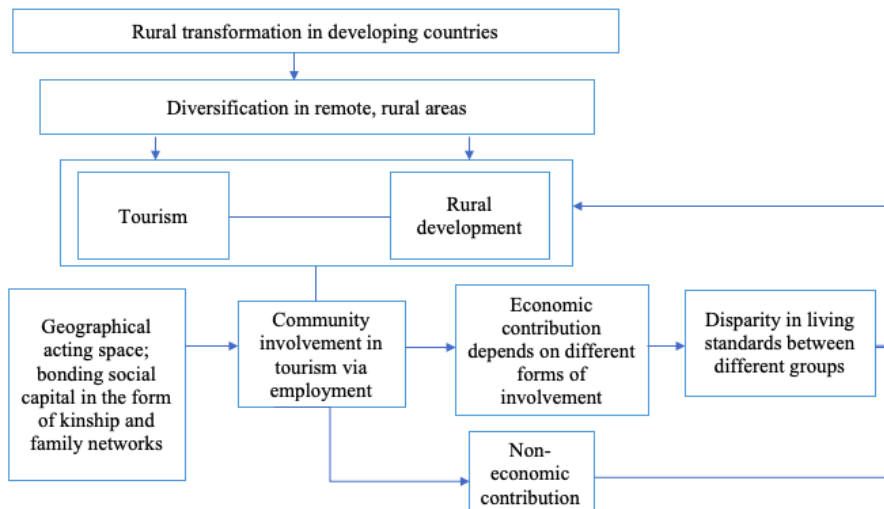
“you must help a man because he is your kinsman”. Thus, it is not surprising that “romanticized view” domains the features of kinship (Coate and Ravallion, 1993).

Kinship is examined in a range of fields. For example, in economics, kinship is included in the research on spending and saving decisions (Bauer and Yamey, 1957; Lewis, 1955); in migration research, Iosifides et al. (2014) found out that among different forms of social capital, kinship is the most crucial cause for the incorporation of Albanian immigrants into Greek society. In this sense, kinship is defined as a form of bonding social capital which refers to the formation of relatively homogeneous social groups. Others pay their attention to the connection between biological categories and formal, informal duties and rights. In other words, the kinship system becomes more important in the weaker formal organizations of the state. According to Pain and Hansen (2019), members in societies will be guaranteed by their kinship because their weak formal institutions of state cannot provide them wealth and security. The cohesion of the kinship group is driven by two elements. The first factor is its ability to give protection and control to their members in a village or region from the impacts of other tribes or states. The second factor is social trust and reciprocity.

Generally, the relation between social capital and tourism has been examined recently and it specializes in three main areas (Moscardo, 2009). The first one specializes in the cooperation between tourism businesses, which finds out that collaborative destination activities can strengthen social capital under forms of trust or belief (Wang and Xiang, 2007; Friedrichs Grangsjø and Gummesson, 2006). The second research topic focuses on the role of tourism on social ties of tourists (Heimtun, 2007; Minnaert et al., 2009; Moscardo, 2009). The last research topic focuses on the connection between social capital and tourism development in rural regions (McGehee et al., 2010; Macbeth et al., 2004). Macbeth et al. (2004) and McGehee et al. (2010) point out the supportive social capital to tourism development through information sharing, coordination of activities, collective decision making and problem-solving, facilitation of business transaction, pride in local culture and heritage and general community well-being. Macbeth et al. (2004) also stressed out the importance of social capital in CBT. Also, other authors identify how social capital is affected by the festival and events in the community (Moscardo, 2007; Arcodia and Whitford, 2006).

Although these studies have examined the relationship between tourism and social capital, many researchers conclude that there is little research specifically focusing on the relationship between social capital and tourism development (Aitchison and Evans, 2003; Patterson and Rodriguez, 2003; Roberts, 2004; Macbeth et al., 2004; George and Reid, 2005; Moscardo, 2007; McGehee et al., 2010;). Particularly, in studies of agriculture and tourism, the notion of kinship is utilized to investigate the relationship between gender and kinship in agriculture and tourism, how the social structure has changed by the continued development of tourism in the local economy (Ireland, 2004). There is a scarcity of research that looks at the notion of kinship in tourism development in the context of rural transformation and rural development in developing countries.

### 2.3. Analytical framework



**Figure 2.1. Analytical framework**

Figure 2.1 illustrates the analytical framework of the current study. It shows the flow of analysis in the research. The whole research is framed in the context of rural transformation in developing countries. Upon one of the most important notions of rural transformation is diversification, along with the comprehensive development in rural, remote areas, tourism is emerging as a tool that can help rural communities to diversify their livelihood, reduce poverty and develop sustainably. This research investigates the community involvement in

tourism via employment that can bring both financial and non-financial benefits to local people. I argue that in a rural area as Viet Hai village that is depicted by special socio-economic characteristics as well as isolated location, factors as geographical acting space, bonding social capital and kinship are responsible for a different range of forms taken by local people in tourism activities. Under the impact of these factors, there are different forms of local involvement in tourism via employment, which results in the disparities in living standards between different groups in local society. This uneven development between local people, local households then provokes a concern on the rural, local development in rural areas.

## **Chapter 3 Case study introduction**

### **3.1. Rural and tourism in Vietnam**

#### **3.1.1. Rural transformation and rural development in Vietnam**

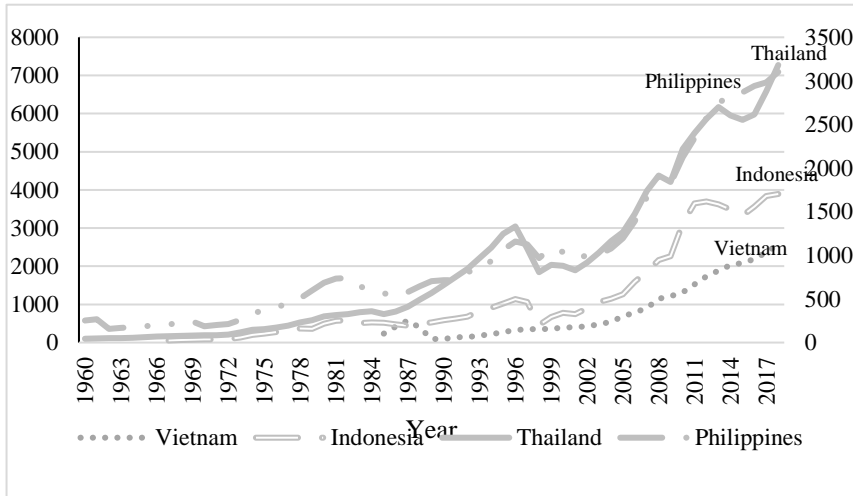
Vietnam is one of eleven countries in Southeast Asia with a total area of about 331,211 km<sup>2</sup> and an estimated 95.5 million inhabitants as of 2018 (GSO). Vietnam is a long, narrow country with a long coastline of 3260 kilometers, excluding islands. The marine area in Vietnam contains approximately 3000 large, small islands and two large archipelagos of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa. Plains account for only 25% of the total land area while the remaining 75% are mountains and hills although 70% of the country lies below 500m above sea level. The country is divided into 58 provinces and five municipalities which are administratively on the same level as provinces. These five municipalities are Ha Noi, Hai Phong, Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City, and Can Tho. All branches of the country's politics and society are under the constitution of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV).

Vietnam and its rural areas have witnessed many significant changes during the last 30 years, especially after the Vietnam Government launched Doi Moi which is an economic reform introduced by CPV in 1986 during the party's sixth National Congress to promote a transition from a centrally planned to a socialist-oriented market economy. This can be seen as a response to crises Vietnam faced early postwar years. The key goals of Doi Moi were to develop a firm technical-material base for the foundation of socialism and integrate Vietnam into the international economy, to improve the productive forces of the economy. The major contents of Doi Moi policy are land reforms, liberalization of trade and investment, market-oriented reforms, and recognition of private sectors (Tran and Yoon, 2008).

Resolution 10 and the Land Law of 1993 triggered the agricultural growth in the 1990s, which moved Vietnam from a hungry country in the 1980s to one of the world's largest rice exporters by the end of the 2000s. Generally, Vietnam has represented remarkably economical and social achievements after Doi Moi. Figure 3.1 shows that during the period from 1986 to 2018, Vietnam has experienced a relatively sustained growth of GDP per capita over the past 30 years, after Doi Moi. Compared to 1986, Vietnam's per capita GDP in 2018

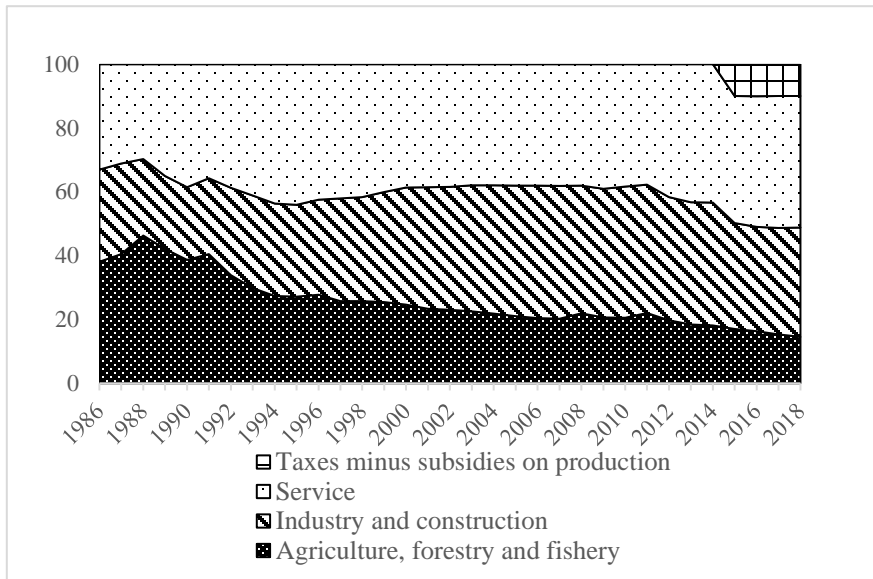
was six times higher than that, increasing from 422.78 USD to 2566.597 USD, respectively. However, it can be seen from the line graph that although GDP per capita in Vietnam has increased over years, it is still behind some countries in Southeast Asia, namely Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines.

**Figure 3.1. GDP per capita of ASEAN- 4 countries**



(Unit: in current USD; Source: World Bank Development Indicators)

**Figure 3.2. The economic structure of Vietnam from 1986 to 2019**

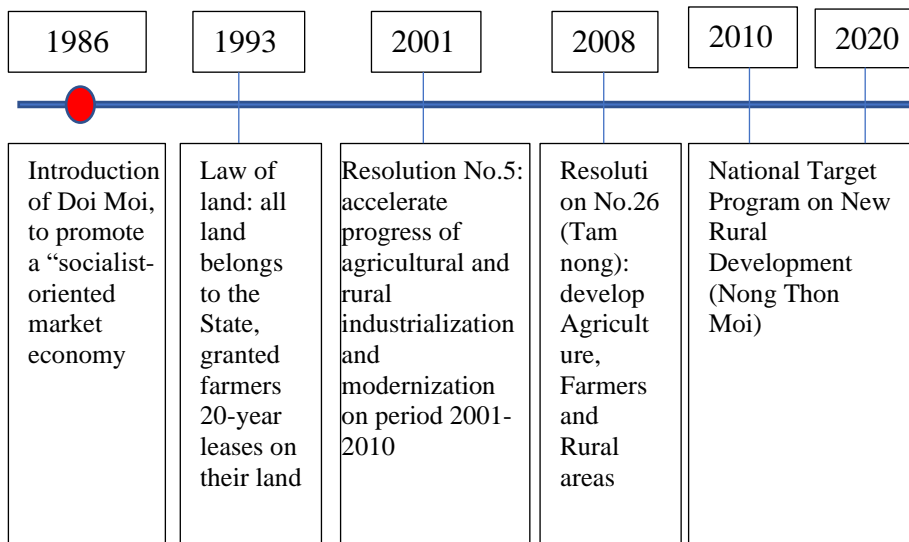


Source: GSO

In line with economic growth, there is a relocation of resources from agriculture to other sectors which illustrates the profound structural transformation in Vietnam (figure 3.2). IFDA (2016) states that countries such as Vietnam, China and Bangladesh are undergoing fast transformation.

The process of deep structural transformation is closely linked to the rural transformation in Vietnam. Vietnam and three countries in the Asia and Pacific (i.e. China, the Philippines, and India) are typical countries where government, policies, and investments are main drivers of rural transformation through land reform, rural investments, and sectoral policies (IFAD, 2016). Evolution of rural development strategies and policies in Vietnam from 1986 to the present time are illustrated as follows:

**Figure 3.3. Evolution of rural development strategies and policies in Vietnam from 1986**



**Source: Nguyen, 2013**

According to Nguyen (2019), the “Nong thon moi” (new rural development) policy has greatly impacted the process of agrarian change in rural Vietnam. The “roof” of New rural development is the “Tam Nong” policy (refers to agriculture, farmers and rural affairs) which was introduced in 2008 by the Communist Party’s Central Executive Committee issued Resolution 26-NQ/TQ dated August 05, 2008, on Agriculture, Farmers and Rural area in combination. New rural development was issued on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 under Decision No.800 of the Prime Minister. A set of 19 criteria that covers planning, socio-economic



infrastructure, economic and production organization, culture-society-environment, and political system are applied to evaluate New rural development in each rural area (See Appendix 4).

By looking at these 19 criteria, to sum up, the government has set a goal of achieving comprehensive development in rural areas in Vietnam, then instead of relying solely on agriculture, rural areas in Vietnam have to diversify their economies to obtain the goal of comprehensive development. The program consists of two stages: the first stage (2010-2015) is the implementation of eleven types of activities while a larger scale will be implemented in the second stage (2016-2020). After 10 years of implementation NTP-NRD, in 2019, a total of 4665 communes (52.4%)<sup>4</sup> met all 19 criteria of New Rural Development, increasing by 35.1%, compared to it at the end of 2015. However, this policy also faces several issues, such as the limitation of funding at local levels and the requirement of effective rural organizations (Marzin and Michaud, 2016).

Under the impacts of many policies after Doi Moi, especially the latest policy of “Nong thon moi”, there are many considerable changes in villages and rural areas in Vietnam. A transition of population from rural to urban results in a higher growth rate of urban population than that of rural population. Over the 1995-2017 period, the rural population in Vietnam increased 1.06 times from 57,057.4 to 60,854.5 while it was 2.2 times for urban population, from 14,938.1 to 32,823.1 (GSO). The Rural, Agricultural, and Fishery Census reported 15.99 million households in rural areas of Vietnam in 2016. Over 10 years from 2006 to 2016, although there was a growth in the number of households in rural areas by 2.22 million people, a downtrend can be seen in the average number of people per household in rural areas from 3.8 people per household in 2011 to 3.6 people per household in 2016 (Nguyen, 2020). Similar to the transition of population from rural to urban is the transition of labor from agriculture to other sectors of industry and services. From 2005 to 2018, the percentage of labor in agriculture, forestry and fisheries of Vietnam decreased from 55.5% to 37.7%. In

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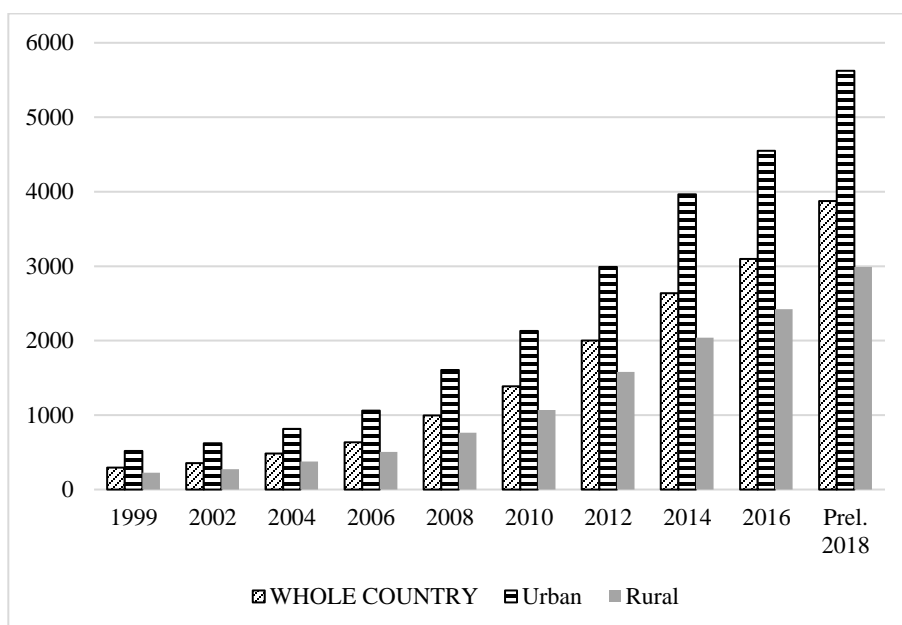
<sup>4</sup> Summary of 10-year National Target Program on New Rural Development report. Information retrieved on April 5th at <http://mattran.org.vn/tin-tuc/tong-ke-10-nam-chuong-trinh-muc-tieu-quoc-gia-xay-dung-nong-thon-moi-29416.html>

contrast, the share of labor in manufacturing rose from 11.8% to 17.9%. Additionally, Vietnam's rural areas are home to 31.02 million working-age individuals, with 15.94 million of them working primarily in the agricultural sector.

1986 economic reforms have established and developed the off-farm economy that plays a crucial role in the diversification of livelihood and increased sources of income for rural inhabitants. Decision No. 132/2000/QĐ/TTg signed by the Premier Minister on 21st November 2000 clearly reflects the policy that aims to boost off-farm business, generate more jobs, improve income, reduce poverty, preserve the traditional culture in rural areas (Vu, 2006). This is also identified by IFAD which research a group of countries with fast structural transformation, rural transformation, and rural poverty reduction (i.e. China and Viet Nam). The sources of income in rural areas are more diversified with the growth in the number of income sources over years. Apart from agricultural activities, farmers and rural population also participate in other activities such as self-employment, waged labor, handicraft production, and tourism. Indeed, the monthly average income per capita at current prices increased in both urban and rural area in Vietnam from 1999 to 2018 although there is still a huge gap between these two regions (figure 3.4)

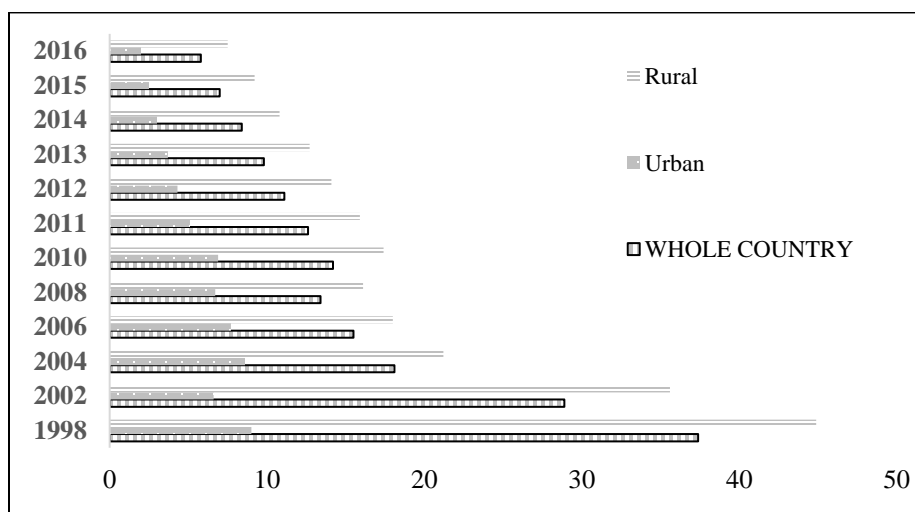
The process of poverty alleviation in Vietnam has gained significant success. The general poverty rate in Vietnam continuously decreased from 1998 to 2016 in the whole country, rural and urban areas as well (figure 3.5). *“Vietnam has achieved tremendous results in reducing poverty and improving the quality of life for millions. The decline in poverty amongst ethnic minorities is encouraging, and more focused efforts on improving their incomes can further broaden their opportunities and reduce persistent inequalities,”* said Ousmane Dione, World Bank Country Director for Vietnam.

**Figure 3.4. Monthly average income per capita at current prices by urban and rural area in Vietnam in 1999 – 2018 period**



Units: Thous. Dongs. Source: GSO

**Figure 3.5. General poverty rate in Vietnam in 1998 – 2016 period**



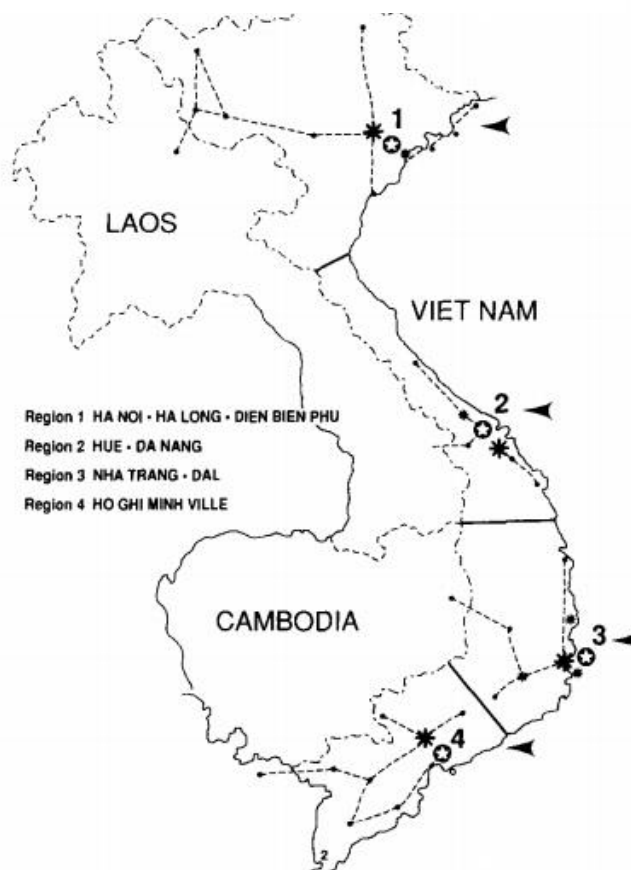
Units: %. Source: GSO

### 3.1.2. Tourism and tourism in rural areas of Vietnam

The open policies of Doi moi have boosted the development of the tourism sector in the whole country. Tourism was considered a way to achieve much-needed foreign exchange for domestic development.

Vietnam is divided into four “poles” or four tourist regions/ tourism zones based on the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) masterplan (VIE/89/003). These four tourism zones are shown in figure 3.6. The Northern Zone (Zone 1) has 23 provinces with Ha Noi as its center. The tourism around Ha Long Bay is also the main focus. The Central Zone (Zone 2) comprises 5 provinces and its centers are the ancestral capital of Hue and the town of Da Nang. Sightseeing in the northern part, heritage tourism in Hue, nature and adventure tourism in the south as well as the Laotian/ Thai tour are main cores in this region. The South-central and Southern Zone (Zone 3 and Zone 4) are centered around Ho Chi Minh city. Historical, natural, cultural, and architectural sites are seen as the main tourism activities in these two regions. Reservation environment is attached in all regions.

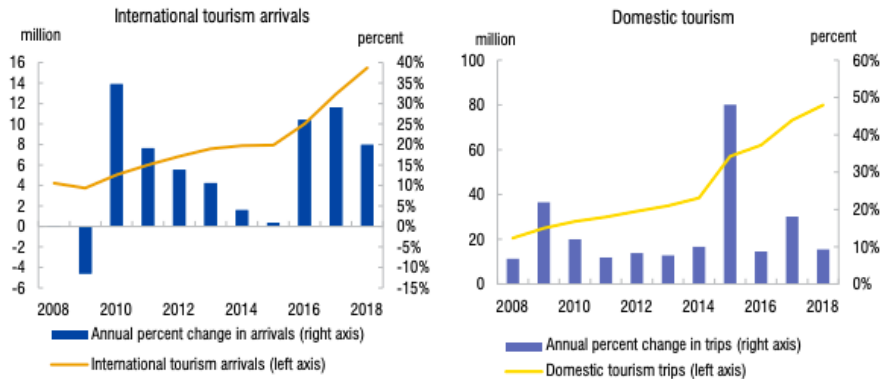
**Figure 3.6. Four tourism zones in Vietnam**



**Source: Tourism Management 1995, Volume 16, Number 4**

According to World Bank (2019), Vietnam has experienced a boom in both inbound and domestic tourism over the past decade. (figure 3.7).

**Figure 3.7. Trends in Vietnam's inbound and domestic tourism**

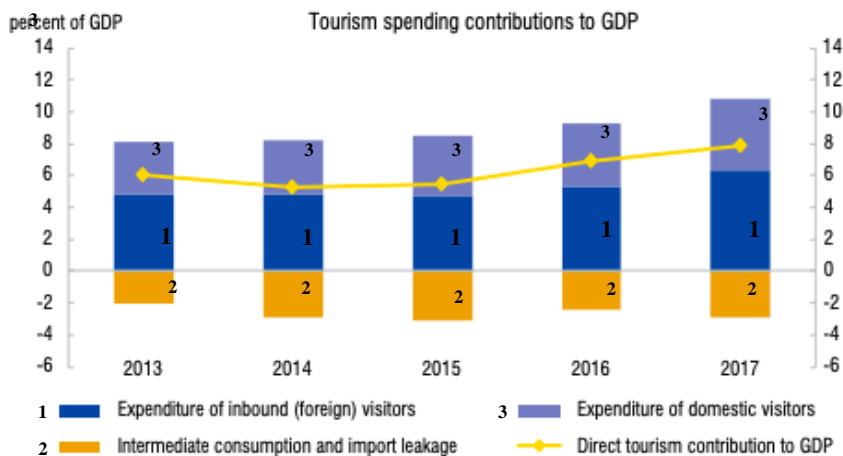


Notes: There was a change in statistical methods to measure domestic tourists in 2015. This partly accounts for the dramatical increases in the number of domestic visitors between 2014 and 2015.

**Source: World Bank (2019), GSO**

Vietnam shared the three largest proportions of international tourist arrivals in Southeast Asia in 2018 with 4.9%, after 7.4% of Malaysia and 11% of Thailand (UNWTO, 2018). There has been a dramatic rise in total tourism receipts in the country from 17.4 VND trillion (~0.75 billion USD) to reach 620 trillion (~26.9 billion USD) over the period between 2000 and 2018 (VNAT, 2020).

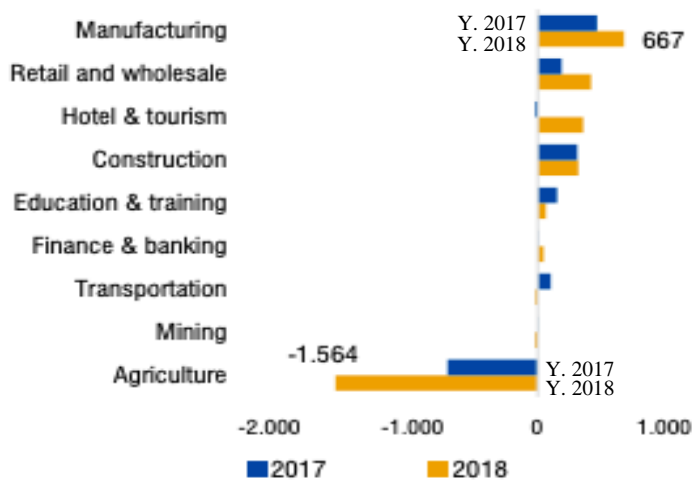
**Figure 3.8. The increasingly important role of tourism in Vietnam**



**Source: TSA, TITC, GSO; Word Bank, 2019**

Tourism has increasingly impacted on the national economy (figure 3.8 and figure 3.9). By 2017, 7.9% of Vietnam's GDP (with additional contributions via indirect multiplier effects) was directly contributed from the tourism industry, compared to only 1.8% in 1994 (VNAT) and was the country's single largest services export (World Bank, 2019). Parallel to this trend, there was an increase in the number of workers in the tourism sector by approximately 300,000 from 450,000 in 2013 to 750,000 workers in 2017 (ITRD, 2017).

**Figure 3.9. Jobs creation by sector (net, thousand)**



**Source: TSA, TITC, GSO; Word Bank, 2019**

Similar to other developing nations, the Vietnamese Government has set tourism as one of the fundamental vehicles for economic development and poverty reduction in rural areas, taking advantage of Vietnam tourism which includes traditional culture, historical relics, scenic landscapes, and political stability (Huynh 2011; VNAT, 2011a). The Ministry of culture, sports, and tourism has recently announced key plans to promote tourism as a spearhead industry to boost the economic growth of Vietnam. The plan is to attract 17-20 million international tourists along with 82 million domestic tourists by 2020. Also, it is expected that the tourism industry will contribute over 10% GDP with the total revenue from tourists reaching 35 billion USD, generating 4 million jobs and reaching an export value of 20 billion USD. The significant contribution of tourism in poverty alleviation and improving life quality for local people has been encouraged in Vietnam's Law on

tourism, that is “in remote and isolated areas and in areas with socio-economic difficulties where there are tourism potentials to make use of the labor force, goods and services in the spot, contributing to raising local people's intellectual level and to hunger elimination and poverty reduction” (GOV, 2005, p. 9). Although there is no official rural tourism in Vietnam so far, many rural areas in Vietnam are the destination of both national and international tourists. Tourism in these rural areas is existing under a range of forms. For example, the handicraft - village tourism in Phuoc Kieu (Quang Nam), Dai Bai (Bac Ninh); Ecotourism (landscape ecology) in the bird garden (Ca Mau, Bac Lieu, Dong Thap...); Culinary tourism or food tourism; Agritourism in the Northern mountainous provinces (Pham and Vu, 2017). According to Hoang (2014), in recent years, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) in 2009 has mentioned six agricultural ecology regions in Vietnam, namely Northern, midland, and mountainous region, Red River Delta region, Central coastal region, Central highland region, South eastern region and Mekong Delta region (MARD, 2009). (figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10. Main agricultural ecology regions of Vietnam**



Source: Hoang (2014), MARD (2009)

Tourism is included in the development strategies of each region and it is also concerning agricultural ecology. The Northern, midland, and mountainous regions have the highland village, Red River Delta has the rural connection to tourism, in the Central coast is the coastal ecology tourism and culture tourism, in the Central highland is the traditional rural villages and agriculture and ecological forestry, with tourism services in ethnic minority communities, in the South eastern region, there is ecotourism and fruit gardens; and Mekong Delta has the rural model of orchards, rural tourism and urban centers (Hoang, 2014; MARD, 2009). Despite significant achievements, rural tourism as well as rural development in Vietnam has to address major issues for the goal of sustainable development, including master plan implementation compliance, infrastructure capacity strains, scarcity of tourism human resource and environmental, cultural, and social sustainability.

## **3.2. Viet Hai commune, Hai Phong city**

### **3.2.1. Hai Phong city, Cat Ba island**

Viet Hai is a sub administrative unit of Hai Phong city. Following the order of administration of Vietnam from highest to lowest, we have Hai Phong city – Cat Hai district – Viet Hai commune – Viet Hai village. Viet Hai is also a part of Cat Ba island, Cat Hai district. Because local people use “Viet Hai commune” and “Viet Hai village” interchangeably, in this research, both Viet Hai commune and Viet Hai village refer to the similar case of Viet Hai. The development of Viet Hai is influenced by policies established by Hai Phong city’s Government and tourism in Cat Ba island. Therefore, it is necessary to have an overview of Hai Phong city, Cat Ba island before exploring Viet Hai.

Hai Phong is a seaport city, located at the mouth of the Cam River, in Vietnam’s northern coastal area, 120km east of Ha Noi. Hai Phong borders Quang Ninh province in the north, Hai Duong province to the west, Thai Binh province to the south and the Gulf of Tonkin to the east. It covers an area of 1561.8 km<sup>2</sup>, with an official population of more than two million people in 2019. 45.6 % of the population resides in urban areas while 54.4% of the population lives in rural areas.

Hai Phong is one of five municipalities of Vietnam, an important center of North Vietnam's triangle of economic growth peak "Hanoi-Haiphong-Quangninh", a major industrial city, the center of economy, culture, education, technology, science and trade in the northern coast of



Vietnam. Hai Phong is also known as a tourist attraction, having a close relation with tourism development in Ha Long Bay (Quan Ninh), Cat Ba island, and many popular islets nearby.

**Table 3.1. Tourism development in Hai Phong**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Total of tourist arrivals (1000 tourists)	5534.14	5974	6707	7804	9078
Tourism Revenue (billion VND)	142.27 (~ 6.18 million USD)	168 (~7.3 million USD)	191.38 (~8.3 million USD)	201.8 (~8.7 million USD)	214 (~9.3 million USD)

**Source: General statistic office of Hai Phong**

Cat Ba is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Hai Phong. It is the largest island of Cat Ba Archipelago, which maintains the dramatic and rugged features of Ha Long Bay. Cat Ba island is a famous tourism destination in Vietnam with both national and international tourists. Tourism has developed considerably in Cat Ba and has the greatest contribution to the island's economy (Mai and Smith, 2015). Cat Ba Island has been included in the itinerary of many Ha Long Bay cruises, receiving more than 350,000 visitors a year. Cat Ba National Park is located at the center of Cat Ba island. Cat Ba National Park is well-known for its ecological diversification. In 2004, Cat Ba Archipelago was declared a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve Area. Table 3.2 demonstrates the tourism development in Cat Ba Biosphere Reserve.

**Table 3.2. Tourism development in the Cat Ba Biosphere Reserve**

<b>Number of tourists (1000 tourist)</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>International tourists</b>	118	122	171	224	250	286.2	303.5
<b>Domestic tourists</b>	210	313	329	505	510	718.8	823
<b>Total</b>	328	435	500	729	760	1,005	1,126.5

**Source: (Mai and Smith, 2015)**

### **3.2.2. Viet Hai commune/ Viet Hai village**

All of information related to Viet Hai in this research was given by Viet Hai People's Committee.

#### ***Location of Viet Hai commune***

Figure 3.11 illustrates the location of Viet Hai in Cat Hai district. Viet Hai commune is located on the east coast of Cat Ba island – Cat Hai district and is also situated in the heart of Cat Ba National Park. As of 2015, Viet Hai commune covers a total of 6839.07 ha<sup>5</sup>. Viet Hai is bordered to the North by “Lach dau xuai”, to the East by Lan Ha Bay, to the South by Cat Ba commune-level town and to the West by Cat Ba National Park and Tran Chau commune. Viet Hai village is divided into two groups, upper group and lower group (figure 3.13). Viet Hai is registered as a remote island commune faced with extreme difficulties by the Government of Vietnam in 2017. The remote location of Viet Hai makes it harder for visitors to reach the village as well as for local villagers to go outside. There are two ways to get there, one by land and one by boat. For the first way, visitors have to trek through a forest as there is no direct road that connects Viet Hai and the Cat Ba Town. For the second way, visitors will take a 45-minute-boat from Cat Ba town. This special location of Viet Hai brings both advantages and disadvantages to the local development. On the one hand, the isolated location of Viet Hai causes many difficulties for the commune, particularly in transportation and connection with other regions. On the other hand, the location of an island commune and also the heart of Cat Ba National Park has attracted tourists with both trekking tours and boat tours.

#### ***Geography***

##### ***Landscape***

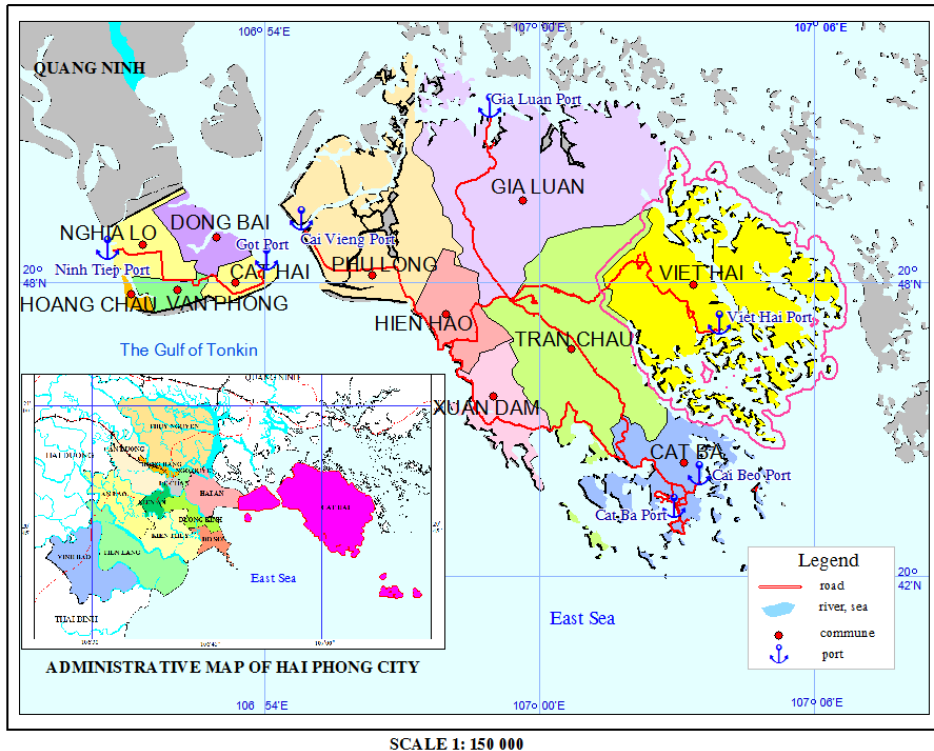
A majority of 98% landscape in Viet Hai is occupied by limestone mountains. The rest are valleys and flats on sandstone. The limestone mountain system is divided into two parts: The part connected with the mountain system on the island with the rugged terrain and a steep slope accounting for approximately 30% of the whole area. The remaining 70% consists of many islands with different sizes. A range of islands distributed on the sea creates many beautiful bays that create

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<sup>5</sup> Information from Viet Hai People's Committee

many favorable conditions for marine ecotourism, transportation (e.g. Cat Ba – Quang Ninh), aquaculture and so forth.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF CAT HAI DISTRICT



**Figure 3.11. Administrative map of Cat Hai district**

**Source: author**

#### *Hydrogeology*

Viet Hai has a dense network of surface flow with the main direction being Northeast to Southwest and flowing into the sea. The topography of Karst and low-lying areas brings an abundant water source for agricultural and forestry production as well as local water supply. The average tide is from 3,3m - 3,5m with the highest water level reaching 4.0m, the lowest water level 0.5m and the maximum amplitude is 3.9m.

#### *Climate*

Viet Hai's climate has a monsoon-influenced tropical climate. There are two seasons in one year, the rainy season from April to October and the dry season from November to March. The annual average temperature in Viet Hai ranges from 22 to 24 degrees celsius and it is 1400 to 1500 mm for precipitation. Rainy seasons fall in July, August, and September, which accounts for around 80% of total rainfall. The average

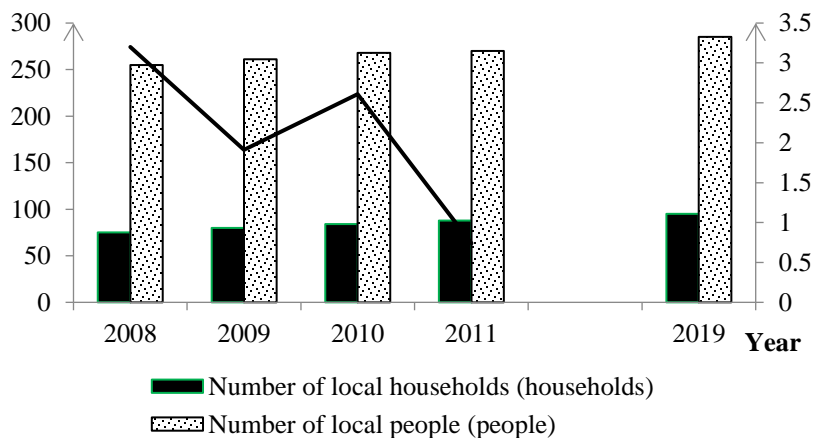
air humidity is 86%. In the dry season, the prevailing wind direction is Northeast while it is Southeast in the rainy season.

### ***Socio-economic conditions of Viet Hai commune***

In 2019, officially, there were 95 registered households and 285 residents in the commune. However, due to migration and type of occupations, it is estimated that there are approximately 77 households regularly living in Viet Hai. As a small island, there are no significant changes in the number of local households and local inhabitants of Viet Hai over the years (figure 3.12).

Dawkins (2007) pointed out that Viet Hai is the home of a great number of local people who migrated from the mainland. They either fled bombing in Hai Phong province during the independence war with French colonial forces in the 1950s or through the resettlement programs of the government, relocating to the commune following the end of the American War. Since 1986, most of the migrants have resided in the village with 15 new families settling in the commune. Among 33 local village interviewees, 22 of them were born in Viet Hai while the other 11 migrated from the mainland. These people have settled in Viet Hai for several reasons. A majority of female interviewees said that they moved to the commune after getting married to their husbands who were born in Viet Hai. In other cases, they decided to live in Viet Hai since they perceived the potential development in the region and wanted to start their lives in the village.

**Figure 3.12. Number of local households, local people and growth rate in Viet Hai from 2008 to 2019**



**Source: Viet Hai People's Committee**

During a period of three years from 2008 to 2011, in Viet Hai, the average population growth rate was 1.75%, the net-migration growth rate was 0% and there was a downtrend in population growth. All residents in the village are of Kinh ethnicity which is the most common group in Vietnam. At the time when this study was conducted in 2019, the results of interviews showed that a large number of local people fall into the 40 to 65 age group, followed by elderly people and children. The number of young people who are living in the village is insignificant due to their movements to other cities to work, to study or to get married. Therefore, Viet Hai may face a shortage of young laborers to implement its development plans in the future, including the CBT program. This issue will be discussed in the final chapter as other rural areas in Vietnam.

The 7-km-maritime transport from Viet Hai to Cat Ba is essential in connecting Viet Hai with other regions, especially the more developed provinces such as Quang Ninh. Apart from this waterway, Viet Hai has a total length of the concreted road is 6500m in which the length from the commune center to the upper group and the lower group is 1500m and the rest is the distance from village's gate to Viet Hai harbor. Currently, the commune is using electricity from the 35KV / 0.4KV-150KVA transformer station, the power for the station is taken from the 35KV Cat Hai line to Cat Ba town.

There are no industrial activities of factories in the commune. Agriculture (wide meaning) plays a fundamental role in the livelihood of Viet Hai's residents with a variety of activities such as rice cultivation, annual crops (e.g. maize, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, etc.) raising livestock (e.g. buffaloes, cattle, horses, pigs, poultry, etc.), fishing, hunting, bee and honey collection. Additionally, before the establishment of the Cat Ba National Park, a considerable number of local people heavily depended on forest resources (Dawkins, 2007). In 2011, agricultural land (including agricultural production land, forestry land, and water surface land for fishing) occupied the second largest proportion of land use in Viet Hai with 46.55% (3184.79ha). Rivers and specialized water surface hold the highest proportion at 52.77%. Only 6.5 ha (0.095) is used for rural homestead land. However according to the interviews with local people, recently, the number of families who cultivate rice and heavily rely on forest resources is steadily decreasing due to its low productivity and the restriction of government upon

hunting and cutting wood. Instead, there is a tendency toward tourism and aquaculture.

There are only one primary school and one clinic in the region. Students have to move to Cat Ba town to study in primary and secondary schools. This primary school comprises both kindergarten (16 students) and a primary level (29 students) as of 2019. According to the local leader, all of the local people have their insurance as of early 2020, compared to 65% a few years ago. There is no market in Viet Hai. Local people buy and sell products in Cat Ba town or Viet Hai as private businesses. Figure 3.13 displays the location of main facilities in the Viet Hai.

100% interview respondents agreed that Viet Hai was a very poor village in the past. According to a representative of the People's Committee, there was a very large number of poor households in Viet Hai 10 years ago. However, thanks to the support from the Vietnamese Government for extremely poor communes, the life quality of local people has been improved significantly. In 2009, an electric power system was operated, along with the construction of concrete roads and the improvement of other infrastructures. In 2011, the local government recognized 4 poor households and 2 near-poor households in the village. In 2019, there were only 2 poor households and no near-poor households in the village.

Overall, Viet Hai is on the progress of rural transportation as other rural areas in Viet Nam. This progress has gained achievements when the commune met all 19/19 criteria of "National Target Programs for New Rural Development", compared to only 3/19 criteria in 2011 (i.e. electricity, cultural village, and security). The local economy has continued to develop with a trend of decreasing traditional agriculture activities and increasing industry and service proportion (especially focus on CBT).

### ***An overview of tourism and CBT in Viet Hai commune***

This part aims to give a general introduction to tourism in Viet Hai commune. The deeper analysis will be exposed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Viet Hai belongs to The Northern Zone (Zone 1) according to the division of tourism zone and the Red River Delta among six agricultural ecology regions in Vietnam by MARD in 2009. Therefore, tourism in Viet Hai has particular features of rural tourism and tourism zones which

were mentioned in Chapter 2. All the respondents and the tourists supported the opinion that the potential for tourism in Viet Hai is natural beauty and the relatively old-fashioned features of an isolated commune without interventions of industrial activities. Thus, the main tourism activities in Viet Hai come from nature, for example walking, climbing, adventure' holidays/wilderness holidays, cycling/cycle touring, horse riding, landscape appreciation, village touring, nature study in outdoor settings, including birdwatching, photography, etc., agri-tourism plays an important role in the development of both tourism and agriculture in Viet Hai.

According to interviewees, Viet Hai has developed tourism for approximately 20 years. However, tourism only witnessed rapid growth in the last three or four years. This is because of the operation of tourism companies from other regions since they started to include Viet Hai as one of the destinations in their tour. Indeed, as a part of The Northern tourism zone, tourism in Viet Hai has a close connection with more developed tourism regions in Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and popular tourist attraction in Quang Ninh Province. Ha Long Bay is a center of a larger zone which consists of Bai Tu Long in the northeast and Cat Ba island to the southeast. Therefore, many tourism companies introduce Viet Hai village to be a stop in their itinerary. The tour can be Ha Noi – Cat Ba – Viet Hai, Ha Noi – Ha Long – Cat Ba - Viet Hai.

According to a tour guide from a big cruise to Viet Hai, there are approximately 30 tourism companies that have their tours in Viet Hai. They are diverse in size, prices and services. These companies mostly come from Ha Noi, Quang Ninh and Hai Phong city. Some big tourism companies have their tourists to Viet Hai are Bhaya- the Cruise Company (Công ty cổ phần thương mại và dịch vụ du thuyền, Bhaya-Âu Cơ), Trails of IndoChina (Công ty đường mòn di sản Đông Dương), Stellar of the Seas (Công ty du thuyền Stellar), Pelican Ha Long – Cat Ba cruise joint stock company (Công ty cổ phần thương mại dịch vụ du thuyền Cát Bà Pelican) and Lan Ha Xanh Company (Công ty Cổ phần thương mại và dịch vụ Lan Hạ Xanh).

In general, tourism in Viet Hai has undergone considerable changes although nature-based rural tourism is still the main core of tourism development in the region. Some of the most important alterations are transportation and accommodation for tourism. Everything is increasingly modernized. In the past, motorbikes were the

main vehicle to take tourists around the village, but they have been replaced by bicycles that tourists can hire from bicycle providers in the village, or trams for those who do not prefer riding bicycles. Furthermore, there is an increase in the number of homestays and rooms for tourists. These homestays are built and owned by local households as their own business. Table 3.3 gives specific information on the development of tourism in Viet Hai recently. Additionally, the distribution of some selected homestays in Viet Hai is illustrated in figure 3.13.

**Figure 3.13. Map of Viet Hai**



Source: author



**Table 3.3. Tourism development in Viet Hai from 2015 to 2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Tourism facilities and tourist arrivals</b>
<b>2015</b>	Viet Hai had a tourist arrival of 17,745. There were more than 150 bicycles and 6 trams used for tourist transport within the village. There was 1 bungalow consisting of 7 rooms to serve tourists who want to stay overnight in the village. It was estimated that around 520 visitors stayed overnight in Viet Hai.
<b>2016</b>	Tourist arrivals to Viet Hai were 12,560, decreased by 17.61% compared to the same period in the previous year.
<b>2017</b>	There was a slight decrease in tourist arrivals to 15,000 in 2017. There were 8 trams, 300 bicycles. There were a total of 8 rooms for tourists. Revenue from tourism was estimated at 150,000 VND (~6.4 USD) per tourist
<b>2018</b>	Tourist arrivals to Viet Hai rapidly grew by 15,235 to 25,900 in 2018. The number of bicycles declined insignificantly to 250 bicycles while the number of trams slightly increased to 9 trams in 2018. Four households are accommodation providers with a total of 30 rooms for up to 70 guests. Also, in 2018, the local government implemented a community-based tourism program. 15 households registered for the program and there were a total of 35 laborers in tourism.
<b>2019</b>	Tourist arrivals to Viet Hai rapidly reached 43,000. There were 7 households are accommodation providers for tourists with a total of 40 rooms; 8 restaurants, 10 shops, 7 tram, 385 bicycles, 9 shops, 3 canoes, and 05 kayak boats. 15 registered households run tourism business and these 15 households are also a member of CBT. There was a total of 42 labors in tourism/ a total of 285 local people .
<b>2020</b>	There were only 12,600 tourist arrivals in the first 6 months of 2020. Due to COVID-19, the number of tourists is expected to decrease significantly (local government official)

**Source: Viet Hai People's Committee**

One of the important events in the development of tourism was the establishment of the CBT program in 2018. Based on the 138/KH-MT dated April 2, 2018 of the Standing Committee of Hai Phong Fatherland Front Committee on the implementing the model of building new rural areas, civilized cities and sustainable poverty reduction in the campaign “All people unite to build new rural areas and civilized cities” in 2018, under the guidance of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Cat Hai district, the People's Committee and the Fatherland Front Committee. Vietnam National Viet Hai commune has collaborated to survey the situation of the construction of new rural areas, sustainable poverty reduction of the locality, proposing to build a model of "eco-friendly community tourism with sustainable economic environment".

CBT is defined by Vice-Chairman from the Viet Hai People's Committee as follows:

*“Community-based tourism model has been established in Viet Hai commune by Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Viet Hai commune last year under the direction and guidance of Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Cat Hai district and Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Hai Phong city. The subject of CBT is all of private businesses in Viet Hai. There have been 15 households registered to participate in the CBT model so far. These 15 households are running their own business in tourism such as homestays, restaurants, bicycle providers. In the process of this model, Viet Hai commune plays a role as an intermediary to gather all registered households together as a community, impose regulations apply to price for tourism services in the region. The registered households in the CBT model are expected to share their tourists for other households if their places are full. In this way, the registered households can collaborate to develop tourism sustainably. The CBT model is designed to bring common benefits for local development”.*

**(Vice-Chairman of Viet Hai People's Committee, 2020)**

The involvement of key stakeholders is pivotal for tourism planning and tourism development in the region. Key stakeholders involved in tourism development in Viet Hai can be seen in the figure below:



**Figure 3.14. Key stakeholders in tourism planning and tourism development in Viet Hai**

**Source: Author based on interviews and Chaichi (2016)**

In particular, each stakeholder has specific roles:

- National/ regional government (Hai Phong city, Cat Hai district): setting goals and standards, spatial planning (e.g. land-use planning), supportive measures, supply and disposal infrastructure, and facilities.
- Local government: setting goals and standards, acts as a regulator in regional tourism development (e.g. regulate prices of accommodation and vehicle), supportive measures (e.g. English education), proposes citizens' requirements and complaints to a higher level of national and regional governments.
- Local villagers: operation of local business such as homestay, restaurants; local planning, and decision-making process.
- The private sector (individual companies): Tourism companies that invest in tourism businesses.
- The local tourists: supply, demand and consume tourism products in Viet Hai
- NGOs (Non-governmental organizations): both national and international NGOs that support local people, especially to help them to improve their English and other personal skills
- Universities, research institutions, consultants: There are several research and projects of researchers in the village. For example, the project of growing flowers in Viet Hai.

Governments at all levels, local people, and private sectors, are making efforts to encourage tourism in the region. This brings up several

questions about the participation of local people in tourism, the contribution of tourism in improving living standards for local inhabitants as well as the effectiveness of policies enacted by the government. These questions will be addressed in the next chapters.

**Figure 3.15. Tourism in Viet Hai**



## **Chapter 4 Local involvement in tourism employment in Viet Hai**

### **4.1. Village engagement in tourism employment**

This chapter aims to address the first question of study that is “How do local people get involved in tourism activities in Viet Hai village”. The result of 32 interviewees who are currently residents in Viet Hai and three interviews with local government officials and local leaders are major sources to answer this question. In addition, it is necessary to find out main explanatory variables that can be used to explain local abilities to take part in tourism activities.

Normally, the hotel sector has the most dominance in tourism. However, in the case of many rural areas where nature-based tourism is the most popular form of tourism, rather than a hotel, rural tourism is dominated by the homestay. Homestay tourism is not new in Vietnam as well as other countries. Many developing countries can be seen as successful cases of homestay tourism, such as Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia and Costa Rica (Kwaramba et al., 2012). Homestay is usually located in rural areas where local communities actively own and manage it, and tourists can enjoy local cultures (Jamal, Othman, and Muhammad, 2011). The definition of homestay varies across countries and regions. For instance, Lanier and Berman (1993:15) understand homestay as “private homes in which unused rooms are rented for the purposes of supplementing income and meeting people”; while the Malaysian homestay programs point out the element of staying together with host families or ‘adopted’ families as the grassroots of the homestay. Homestay is a part of community-based tourism because local people are believed to gain more benefits through directly operating and managing homestays. Additionally, homestay tourism is seen as an effective tool to preserve local culture.

In Viet Hai, homestays are run by local individual homeowners. It can be defined as “a period during which a visitor in a foreign country lives with a local family”, according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2007). The guest, therefore, can interact with the host family and learn and experience local cultures. However, the operation of homestay in Viet Hai has gradually changed over the years. In the past, there was no official term of homestay in the region. It was simply understood as a

period when local people accommodate tourists in their house. In addition, they provided food for tourists. Over the years, some local households started to invest a huge amount of money in constructing homestays, bringing in a new appearance for a homestay in the region. It looks more modern and is equipped with up-to-date appliances as well. In Viet Hai, the operator of the homestay extended its services like restaurant and transportation provision. Restaurants, retail outlets, transport and souvenir shops are indispensable at any tourism destination. In Viet Hai, these serve not only tourists but also local residents. Local restaurants provide self-cooked food from using available agricultural products of locals. Retail outlets provide drinks, snacks and other convenient items and transportation includes kayaks, bikes and trams.

Multiple employment and multi-services are typical characteristics of local involvement in tourism employment of Viet Hai. Multiple employment is defined as the situation in which “an individual is employed in more than one activity, perhaps tending the fields or teaching school during the day and performing for tourists at night, or farming during some parts of the year and producing arts for sale when the agricultural rounds permit” (Cukier-Snow and Wall, 1993). Tourism employment in developing countries is typically portrayed by multiple employment. In Viet Hai, for example, people who belong to the indirect and non-involvement groups, can do homestay work in the daytime and aquaculture and farming in nighttime; or people who are not involved in tourism do farming and aquaculture at the same time. Even with a part of people who directly get engaged in tourism, they tend to cook wine, and practice farming or aquaculture during their free time. Multi-services are already explained above as a bulk of direct involvement households provide multiple services to tourists, rather than only one service.

Among 32 villagers who took part in the interview, one respondent (Interviewee L3) stated that their household is one of three households in the village that have been engaged in tourism since 1994 and still run their business as an accommodation and food provider for tourists. The picture of tourism in Viet Hai has changed considerably, compared to 20 years ago which was stated as when a vast majority of interviewees believed local people started to get engaged in tourism. All of the interviewees affirmed that there is a significant increase in the number of people who are involved in tourism activities in the region, compared to only a small number of two or three households in that past.

However, when local people were asked about the estimated percentage or number of local households/ individuals who are a part of tourism activities, their answers can be divided into two groups, reflecting the way local villagers get involved in tourism employment.

Particularly, one group of interviewees provided the answer that in the village, at present time, there are 10-13 households get engaged in tourism while another the group believes that people who are participating in tourism account for 40 percent to 50 percent or even higher at 70 percent to 80 percent of total villagers. This difference comes from the fact that the former group accounts only for households directly engaged in tourism by running their own business such as homestay, restaurants, electric golf cars or owning all of these at the household level. As a result, tourism is the most important source of income in these households. Meanwhile, the latter group counts all of these directly involved households/ people and those indirectly taking part in tourism activities such as vegetable providers, meat providers or part-time workers at local businesses. These people or households' income, therefore, can depend partly on tourism. Answers provided by one interviewee in between two groups, who was born in Viet Hai and used to be a tour guide a long time ago can be used to illustrate this difference:

*“It is very difficult for me to give an answer to the question of counting the percentage of people who are getting engaged in tourism activities in Viet Hai. I cannot count it. For example, villagers who are homestay owners, tram drivers, they are definitely involved in tourism. Besides these people, vegetable growers who sell their agricultural products to local homestay or restaurant, they can be considered as people who are involved in tourism as well”.*

**(Interviewee L30, 2020)**

Following his statement and correlating it to the research on tourism employment of other searchers, it is clear that tourism employment is listed in a different classification. Johnson and Thomas (1990) and Vanhove (1981) propose three types of tourism employment based on expenditure, namely direct, indirect and induced tourism employment. According to them, direct tourism employment is employment which directly serves expenditure. Indirect tourism employment comes from the supply chain that serves those sectors providing direct employment. Johnson and Thomas (1990) add that in

case that those sectors providing direct employment was “completely vertically integrated” (i.e. when a company/ business/ entrepreneur that operates within one section of overall supply chain needs other company/ business/ entrepreneur within the same supply chain), indirect employment is seen as a part of the total of direct employment. Induced employment results from spending and responding incomes earned from direct and indirect employment. Generally, due to the difficulty of collecting data and uncertain characteristics, direct employment is the crucial objective (Johnson and Thomas, 1990) while indirect, especially induced employment is uncertain to identify. Therefore, many researchers categorize tourism employment into two main types, namely direct (formal, regular) and indirect (informal, irregular) tourism employment. For example, in the research of Shukla and Ansari (2013), direct jobs are created by tourism activities including establishments like travel agencies, restaurants, hotels, transport, tourist shops, handloom and handicraft industries.

Table 4.1 shows different forms of village involvement in tourism in Viet Hai and the main features of each form at both individual and household level. At individual level, there are three forms of village engagement in tourism, namely direct involvement, indirect involvement and non-involvement. These three forms are identified based on the result of 32 interviewees. At household level, the direct involvement is recognized based on the CBT list given by local government officials. Particularly, interviewee’s households who are members of CBT are considered under direct involvement since the CBT list includes local households that own businesses in tourism. Because CBT only provides information of direct involvement and no available information for indirect involvement, at household level, household involvement in tourism is divided into two forms, including direct household and a combination of indirect and non-household.



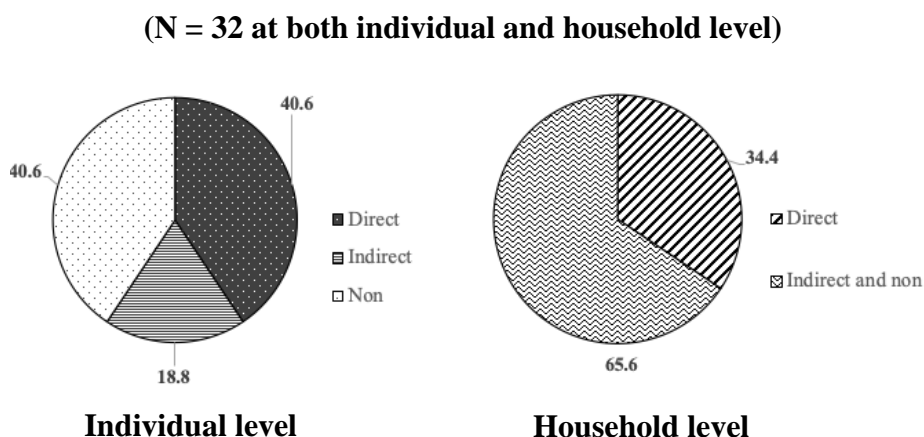
**Table 0.1. Different forms of village involvement in tourism activities in Viet Hai**

	<b>Direct involvement (Direct)</b>	<b>Indirect involvement (Indirect)</b>	<b>Non-involvement (Non)</b>
<b>Individual level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Owner of local tourism businesses or</li> <li>- Regular employee in local tourism businesses</li> <li>- Local retailer</li> <li>- Person who leases their land for tourism purposes and directly sells tourism products for tourists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-demand/seasonal employee in other business</li> <li>- Person who support tourism activities (provide intermediate/related goods/services)</li> <li>- Person who leases their land for tourism but does not sell anything directly to tourists.</li> </ul>	Person who does not get involved in any tourism activities.
	(e.g. homestay owner, tram driver)	(e.g. vegetable providers for local restaurants; homestay work)	(e.g. teacher)
<b>Household level</b>	Household who is a member of CBT program. (CBT program consists of 15 registered households in Viet Hai. All of these households are local tourism business)	Other households (both indirect involvement and non-involvement)	
	(e.g. homestay, restaurant, beverage)	(e.g. household does aquaculture)	

Source: 32 local interviewees, Viet Hai People's Committee; Vanhove (1981); Johnson and Thomas (1990), Cukier-Snow and Wall (1993)

The percentage of each form is calculated separately based on different sources of data, see figure 4.1, table 4.2 and table 4.3 for the result of 32 local interviewees; Table 4.4 show the calculation based on data of Viet Hai People's Committee. Using the results of interviews with 32 local people (figure 4.1, table 4.2 and table 4.3), it shows that at both individual and household levels, persons/ households that are directly involved in tourism share a smaller percentage than persons/ households who are indirect and have non-involvement.

**Figure 0.1. Different forms of community involvement in tourism activities in Viet Hai**



Source: 32 local interviewees in 1/2020

**Table 0.2. Interview statistics 1**

	Form of involvement (individual level)			Form of involvement (household level)	
	Direct	Indirect	Non	Direct (CBT member)	Indirect and Non (Non-CBT member)
<b>Number of interviews</b>	13/32	6/32	13/32	11/32	21/32
<b>Percentages</b>	40.6%	18.8%	40.6%	34.4%	65.6%

**Table 0.3. Interview Statistics 2**

	<b>Member of CBT</b>		
		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Form of involvement</b>	<b>Direct</b>	11	2
	<b>Indirect</b>	0	6
	<b>Non</b>	0	13

Particularly, at individual levels, among 32 respondents, 13 persons (accounted for 40.6% of interviewees) were directly involved in tourism activities. These 13 direct involving persons include one tram driver, seven owners of local business such as restaurants, beverage shops or homestays, one owner of the local shop, who also leases her land for tourism companies, one retailer and three regular workers in local shops. They are household members of these local businesses. Interestingly, while in other rural areas of many developing countries (e.g. Malaysia, Nepal), many local people directly get involved in tourism as a local tour guide or local travel agency, this is not really the case in Viet Hai. It is not easy to find a local tour guide in Viet Hai village. This can be explained by the shortage of young labour and other skills. This issue will be further discussed in the final chapter. The indirect and non-involvement in tourism employment has 19 interviewees (occupied 59.4%) in which only six of them can be considered as indirect involvement and 13 interviewees are non-employed. Six indirectly involved villagers (18.8%) are irregularly employed by other local small tourism businesses (i.e. doing homestay work); or indirectly supply foodstuffs (e.g. meat, vegetables, drinks) for other local businesses (i.e. homestay, restaurant); or tourism construction workers in the region; or they lease their land for tourism purposes but they do not sell anything to tourists and other local businesses. Some tourism companies or outside individual investors (e.g. La Regina, a tourism company) went to Viet Hai and rented the land of local villagers. In this case, the tour operator does the marketing and product development while the remote area destination provides the setting for interest. Non-involvement covers villagers who do not take any tourism-related jobs, which occupied 40.6% of interviewees. These persons are doing non-tourism activities, for instance, farmer, teacher, local government official, aquaculture farmer, freelancer and bee collector.

At the household level, community engagement in tourism activities is also divided into two groups, namely directly involved households and indirect plus non-involved households. This classification is created based on the list of CBT members in Viet Hai in 2019-2020 since all of the 15 registered households in CBT program are local tourism businesses in the region who run their own business in the tourism industry, namely homestay, restaurant, beverage shop, souvenir shop, transport provider and retail distributor (table 4.4). These households totally own and control their business by themselves. In addition, they are able to directly contact explorer tourists and develop tourism by themselves. According to the list of 15 registered members of CBT, 10 out of 15 members provide miscellaneous services which means they can be accommodation providers, food providers or bicycle providers at the same time. Only 4 households provide only one service, namely only bicycle provision (one household), only food (two households) and only retail distribution (one household). Therefore, these 15 households are considered under direct involvement in tourism. Among 13 direct involving interviewees at the individual level, there are 11 persons and their households are members of CBT while the other two direct participants' households are not a member of CBT, accounting for only 15.8% of total interviewees' households (figure 4.1).

**Table 0.4. Local government statistics in 2019**

	<b>Form of involvement (individual level)</b>		<b>Form of involvement (household level)</b>	
	Direct	Indirect and Non	Direct (CBT member)	Indirect and Non (Non-CBT member)
<b>Number of local people (household)</b>	42/285	243/285	15/95	80/95
<b>Percentages</b>	14.7%	85.3%	15.8%	84.2%

The similar picture is seen from the data given by the local government to calculate the percentage of each group at individual and household levels (table 4.4). In 2019, among 285 local residents, only 42

villagers were directly involved in tourism while a majority of 243 villagers fell under indirect and non-involvement. At household level, only 15 local households are members of CBT or direct involvement while a considerably larger number of 80 local households comprise indirect and non-involvement. Therefore, we can see the consistency between the result of the interview and data from local government when at both household and individual level, there is an unequal proportion of two forms of community involvement in tourism employment, which shows that the total percentage of indirect and non-involvement is higher than direct involvement.

These figures indicate the low direct involvement in tourism employment at both individual and household level, in contrast to the long-time development of tourism in the village (According to interviewees, Viet Hai has developed tourism for an estimated 20 years). In other words, a majority of local people and households cannot get a direct benefit from tourism, which I believe will lead to increasing disparity between local people/households that directly get involved in tourism employment and those belonging to the indirect and non-involvement groups. Before finding the answer to this question, it is necessary to investigate which factors cause the different forms of local involvement in tourism employment in the village as well as the low number of direct participants in tourism. A mechanism of explanatory variables will be exposed in the next section

## **4.2. Geographical acting space (GAS); family and kinship networks**

This section gives an explanatory mechanism that is used to find out, even though local people have some common favourable conditions, why some people/ households can directly get involved in tourism employment? Why do some people/ households indirectly get involved in tourism activities or non-involvement?

The result of the interview shows that different capitals are recognized as common entry advantages and at the same time, cause common entry difficulties for the local community to get involved in tourism. Meanwhile, geographical acting space and bonding social capital in the forms of kinship and family networks are considered distinctive factors that cause the difference in local involvement in tourism among local individuals/households.

#### **4.2.1. Common favourable conditions and common entry barriers**

##### ***Common favourable conditions***

A very large number of interviewees, including local villagers, local government and especially tourists had a similar answer for the interview question: “What are the advantages of Viet Hai to develop tourism?” Especially for tourists, they all agree that they love the tranquil atmosphere, fresh air and deep nature in Viet Hai. In other words, tourists are interested in tourism in Viet Hai mostly because of its nature-based tourism, unique rural lifestyle and friendly local people.

In Viet Hai, the natural elements, especially the characteristics of landscape and climate have a great contribution to developing ecotourism in the whole region. The limestone mountains, sandstone, a variety of islands with different sizes as well as many beautiful bays (e.g. Van Boi, Ba Trai Dao) are good conditions for ecotourism, transportation (e.g. Cat Ba – Quang Ninh) and aquaculture. In addition, two seasons (rainy and dry season), along with an average air humidity of 86% create pleasant weather for tourists to enjoy outdoor activities. Furthermore, the remoteness also brings unique favourable conditions for Viet Hai to develop tourism while this cannot be seen in all rural areas. All the interviewees believe that tourists are attracted by a small village in the midst of jungles, covered by high mountains range of Cat Ba National Park, which belongs to Cat Ba island, Cat Hai district. Local people usually use the word “island of the island” and the “core of Cat Ba National Park” to describe the special characteristics of Viet Hai’s location.

In contrast to the busy atmosphere in other big cities, Viet Hai gains tourists’ attention with its quiet atmosphere. Tourists, therefore, can discover Viet Hai by two roads: the first road is to take a boat from Cat Ba town to Viet Hai harbour, then motorbike, cycle, take an electric golf car, or trek to Viet Hai village, passing a forest road 6 km to the village. The second way is following the track of Cat Ba National Park until it merges into the minor road leading to the village. Tourists, therefore, can enjoy the beauty of Lan Ha Bay on the way from Cat Ba town to Viet Hai harbour with hundreds of islets, sandy beaches and floating houses, or enjoy the atmosphere of forestry in Cat Ba National Park. At the heart of Cat Ba National Park, recognized by UNESCO in 2004, is one of the world’s biosphere reserves with a range of flora and fauna (i.e. Over 1,500 species of plant, including 118 trees and 160 plants

with medicinal properties and 282 species have been recorded so far, consisting of 177 species of coral, 196 species of marine fish, 98 species of zooplankton, 20 species of reptiles and amphibians, 78 birds species and 32 species of mammals (Lonely Planet, retrieved 24 April 2016). This has attracted a large number of tourists who have a strong interest in discovering nature. Natural capital is a source of tourism indirectly through agricultural activities. In other words, the distinctive nature and clean air of the island is a favourable condition for growing fruits and feeding poultry and livestock to serve the needs of tourists.

Besides the unique nature and location, Viet Hai also has advantages of cultural capital and human capital that plays an important role in tourism development in many rural areas. Cultural capital is defined as “stock of values, arts, crafts, cultural knowledge, performance and access to heritage resources” (Emery and Flora, 2006; McGehee et al., 2010). More specifically, cultural capital consists of the conservation of local history, art and traditional cuisine in the forms of art colonies or festivals (Bennett et al., 2012). Culture as “a general way of life” is an “unalienable product of place” and it presents the physical forms of cultural capital (Zukin, 1991:28). Viet Hai has the remaining antiquated cottages which draw attention from foreign tourists. For example, one of the interviewers who directly got involved in tourism said that her household still keeps the soil-built house they had before the 2010 flood and many foreign tourists are interested in it when they pass by her house. Thanks to that, the travel company then offered to rent her land for tourism. Furthermore, Viet Hai Ancient House is also a beautiful and quiet space for many tourists. Tourists who come to Viet Hai have chances to experience a typical rural life of a village in Northern Vietnam, including cultivation, aquaculture and fishing and the unique culture of the inhabitants on the island. Viet Hai is also well-known for its diverse coastal cuisine and traditional pharmaceutical materials, food, and drinks (e.g. traditional wine). In Viet Hai, local people know each other because of the small population, creating a friendly community without social evils.

The attractiveness of rural tourism that is based on natural capital, remote location, cultural capital and human capital can be seen in the introduction about Viet Hai on many travel websites and the review from tourists who have been to Viet Hai. For example, Viet Hai is introduced by a tourism website called “alo trip.com”, an official site of AloTrip

International Limited, incorporated under the Companies Ordinance, assisting travellers to have more knowledge about travel in Vietnam. They introduce Viet Hai as follows:

*“The locals are really friendly, honest and hospitable...No matter what any families need for help, everyone in the village is available. Viet Hai is almost "clean" with all sorts of social evils. Immersed in the peaceful daily life of the locals here, tourists surely get extremely enjoyable experiences. Here, tourists will have a chance to soak up the extremely peaceful and poetic scenery and forget the hustle and bustle of urban life...*

*Over the years, tens of thousands of tourists have looked for the village to visit. They had heard the untouched rendezvous among the world's biosphere reserve, Cat Ba National Forest to visit and learn. Together with other fishing villages in Halong Bay in general, Viet Hai fishing village also significantly contributes to promote the image of Halong Bay and Cat Ba travel to tourists”*

Similarly, on the travel website “tripadvisor.com”, Viet Hai received 10 excellent reviews, 13 very good reviews, 6 average reviews from international tourists. Most of them are impressed by the natural beauty and peaceful space in Viet Hai as “cute village” (review in May 2018), or “Wonderful Day Trip” (January 2020) or “Lovely trekking and biking tour” (April 2020) or “An eco-friendly farming Village” (April 2016).

*“The opportunity to visit the village was an option on a 2- day-cruise with the Au Co cruise line. The options were to either bike or use an electric car to reach the village. Certainly, the area was an organic farm with buffalo, ducks and chickens also present. A modern school was built after the significant floods of some years ago which wiped out the village. Interesting Killara High school helped fund Sind of the rebuilding of the school which accommodates children to year 6. Certainly from a humanitarian perspective, it was interesting to visit and the bike track was described as challenging as it included two steep hills”*

**(An average reviewer on tripadvisor.com in April 2016)**

### ***Common entry barriers***

Although Viet Hai has its own advantages to develop rural tourism under the form of ecotourism or cultural tourism, local people, in general, have to face some common obstacles, namely isolated location, financial constraints, poor human resource, a poor system of



infrastructures and facilities. These barriers do not have sole impacts on local engagement in tourism, rather they integrate together to have negative impacts on local involvement in tourism employment.

Lack of financial capital can be found in tourism development in any areas (Svržnjak et al., 2014). According to Green and Haines (2008), individuals and communities can take part in the tourism industry if they possess financial capital. Viet Hai villagers are also facing the financing constraints in tourism development. All of the interviewees in three forms of community involvement in tourism reported financial issues as one of the most important difficulties to get involved in tourism. For the direct involvement group, they talked about how it was hard for them to overcome financing issues. All of the interviewees who are directly engaged in tourism activities and are also registered members of CBT program answered that they had to borrow money from their relatives, their friends or get a loan from the bank to start their own business. Some of them reported that they have not yet paid back their loans. As for indirect and non-involvement groups, they clearly pointed out it is almost impossible for them to get engaged in the development of local tourism because they lack money and other factors that will be discussed in the next section.

*“Currently, I guess all villagers have a desire to directly get involved in tourism. However, first and foremost, they need money. For example, if my friend and his wife want to run a homestay to serve the need of accommodation for tourists, they must invest more than 1 billion VND (~ 43,000 USD at current US\$) to build a normal homestay. But you see, they do not have enough money. Similarly, we (local inhabitants) have nothing to get involved in tourism. We actually need someone who can invest in tourism and in exchange, we have land for lease. For instance, you have money and I have land, then we can collaborate to develop tourism. But you know it is hard for us to call for investment from tourism companies. Therefore, we cannot run our own business in tourism by ourselves or even borrow money from a bank. Why? Because Viet Hai people are only given a maximum of 50 million VND (~2200 USD), not more. Even in case you have your certificate of land ownership, you cannot borrow much from the bank because the value of land in Viet Hai is very low. 500m<sup>2</sup> is equivalent to just 100 million VND (~4300 USD). It is not enough to do anything, except buying rice for food security” (Local leader, interview 2020)*

As the way the above local leader shared her thoughts, in order to directly get engaged in tourism through becoming an owner of a homestay, restaurant, bicycle provider or opening a beverage shop, participants strongly argued that local villagers need a large amount of money. Indeed, one of the interviewees who belongs to the direct involvement group reveals that he had to invest up to 2 billion VND (~86,000 USD at current US\$) to run his own homestay. Interestingly, from the statement of a local leader, we can see the interrelation between the remote location and lack of local capital in Viet Hai. Particularly, local people in Viet Hai have their right to borrow money from two banks with different types. They can borrow a maximum of 50 million VND (~2200 USD) from Vietnam Bank for Social Policies without a mortgage. They will pay off this amount of money within 5 years with a low-interest rate of 0.65%. Another way is local people can apply for a mortgage on their land ownership certificate to Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. The amount of money they can borrow totally depends on the value of the land they own. However, a majority of local people state that the money they can borrow from Vietnam Bank for Social Policies without a mortgage has no meaning for them to run their own business in tourism because they need a bigger amount of money to start their business. Ideally, they can borrow it from Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development with a mortgage on their land ownership certificate. The problem in Viet Hai in this situation relates to their remoteness. Particularly, as a remote area of an island, the land that the village is situated on is legally owned by the state and approximately 2/3 of local people do not have land ownership certificates. Consequently, without the land ownership certificate, local people cannot use it to mortgage their land in order to borrow a large amount of money from Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development for the purpose of tourism development.

Another issue is that local people who want to develop tourism on their land have to register with the Government at the District level for the purpose of land-use conversion and get permission from the Government of Cat Hai District. Many respondents commented that this was a very complicated process and took a long time to wait for approval from the Government of Cat Hai District. The following interviewee who is directly involved in tourism also faced difficulty in expanding her

household's tourism business due to remote location and land use on the island.

*“As far as I know from the local government, they recognize our land is unauthorized land. However, apparently, it is contradictory when I was born in this village, but we haven't possessed a certificate of land ownership yet. Our household is about to run a homestay or sell a part of the land to take that money and expand our tourism business, but it is impossible because I do not own a certificate of land ownership. So far, in the village, there is a small number of households who have a certificate, but not our household”*

**(Interviewee L11, 2020)**

Apart from the aforementioned barriers, because Viet Hai is located in the heart of Cat Ba National Park, all of the economic activities inside the area, including tourism, have to be carefully considered without damaging the natural environment of the National Park. The remoteness and issue of land ownership also cause high transportation costs and other blocks that prevent outside investors to invest in tourism in Viet Hai as the way the local vice chairman states:

*“Many companies come here to survey the area and they show their desire to invest in local tourism. Nevertheless, there are many current policies that are difficult for them to rent projected land in local. Because the locality (Viet Hai people's Committee) does not have the right to lease land, only the district government has the authority to lease the projected land. Additionally, because investors want to rent land over many years, this will be an issue for us”.*

**(Vice-Chairman of Viet Hai People's Committee, interview 2020)**

Additionally, according to all of the interviewees, the isolated location is the reason Viet Hai villagers have to spend more on expenditure, compared to other regions. In other words, living in a remote island with the difficulty in connecting with other regions, the price of everything in Viet Hai is two or three times higher than that in other areas. Local people, therefore, have no savings to invest in tourism. This is also the way the following interviewee talked about her life in Viet Hai:

*“In Viet Hai, products purchased by local people are as expensive as that by tourists. Furthermore, because we are distant from the mainland, the transport fee is very high”*

**(Interviewee L32, 2020)**

Local people in Viet Hai have to deal with low skills and language barriers to get involved in tourism. Some participants expressed their desire to have an opportunity to learn how to start their own business in tourism. All of the interviewees have the same opinion on the insufficiency of English that is very crucial for them to communicate with international tourists. Language barriers cause many problems for transcultural communication (Cohen and Cooper, 1986). Parallel to the language barrier is the ageing population in Viet Hai as the middle-aged and elderly people find it harder to study a new language. Poor infrastructure and facilities although these have been improved recently are also one of the obstacles local have to overcome in order to develop tourism. Some interviewees reported that a number of their Vietnamese tourists do not find any recreational places in Viet Hai. Therefore, they cannot spend a longer time in the village, except just 30 minutes to 1 hour.

#### **4.2.2. Geographical acting space and kinship networks: two main factors that lead to two different forms of local involvement in tourism employment in Viet Hai**

The result of interviewing local people and local government reveals that the difference in GAS and kinship networks among local individuals and local households are the main reasons why there are different forms of local involvement in tourism employment in Viet Hai. This can be illustrated in the following table 4.5.

**Table 0.5. Geographical acting space, bonding social capital and family and kinship networks**

	<b>For both household-level and individual-level</b>	
	<b>Direct involvement</b>	<b>Indirect and non-involvement</b>
<b>Geographical acting space</b>	<b>Wide</b>	<b>Narrow</b>
<i>Brief explanation and corresponding example</i>	- <i>Brief explanation:</i> + Wide external social network with outside tour operators/tourism	- <i>Brief explanation:</i> Narrow external social network with outside tour

	<p>companies through many channels (e.g. friendship, relatives, Internet)</p> <p>- <i>Example:</i>  + Interviewee L4, L2: collaborates with tour operator through the introduction of friends  + Interviewee L5: collaborate with tour operator through the Internet, friends  + Interview L9: collaborates with 5 tour operators through relatives, friends</p>	<p>operators/ tourism companies</p> <p>- <i>Example:</i>  + Interviewee L14: No collaboration with tour operators, non-participant in tourism employment</p>
<b>Family and kinship networks</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Weak</b>
<i>Brief explanation and corresponding example</i>	<p>- <i>Brief explanation:</i>  Strong internal social network between individual/ households and their relatives</p> <p>- <i>Example:</i>  + Interviewee L1: directly joins tourism because of kinship with a cousin who is an owner of local tourism business.</p>	<p>- <i>Brief explanation:</i>  Weak internal social network between individual/ households and their relatives</p> <p>- <i>Example:</i>  + Interviewee L28: no relatives in the village, non-participant in tourism.</p>

***Geographical acting space (GAS) - external networks with outsiders (i.e. tour operators, tourism companies and investors)***

GAS refers to the external relationship with tour operators and investors outside Viet Hai village. People in rural, remote areas in Viet Hai usually find different channels that help them to connect with outside tour operators because these tour operators play an essential role in

tourism development in Viet Hai. This research, therefore, takes the same notion of GAS that is explained by Pain and Hansen (2019) as follows: “Based on their experiences, people try to create a better world for themselves through building alliances with others both through formal and informal channels. Thus, it is necessary to analyze not only how acting space is structured but also how people organized their uses of their acting space for action”.

Based on this analysis, the current study will look at how Viet Hai villagers try to make a better life by finding opportunities to take part in tourism, which is believed by local people to generate higher and more regular income. These opportunities can be understood as their ability to create new social networks with the “outside world”, outside the island. Therefore, the difference in GAS is actually a difference in the way each local individual or household creates their acting space/ their external social network and how they utilize their space for the purpose of tourism development. External social network here refers to the interconnected group of people who usually have an “attribute in common” of tourism development. These groups of people are local villagers and outside tour operators and investors.

One question that needs to be answered here is: in the case of tourism development and tourism involvement in a rural area as Vietnam, why are the external networks between local people and outside tour operators a crucial component of GAS? Indeed, tour operators hold the key role of the package tourism industry in a way that tourism operators act as intermediaries who connect providers (local communities) and consumers (tourists) together in the tourism distribution system (Gartner and Bachri, 1994; Wearing and McDonald, 2002; Budeanu, 2005). As a part of tourism distribution channels, the role and influence of tour operators and travels agents were early recognized in the statement of WTO (1975): “In tourism, the position of the distribution sector is much stronger: trade intermediaries (i.e.travel agents and tour operators of course, but also charter brokers, reservation systems and other travel distribution specialists) have a far greater power to influence and to direct demand than their counterparts in other industries do”. In general, there are two types of tour operators within a remote area system. One type is located at the destination, and the other at the tourist generating region which may or may not be internationally based. There is no tour

operator in Viet Hai since this region is a remote area that is far away from the centre.

In the case of Viet Hai, 100% interviewees state that rural tourism in the region achieves popularity due to the introduction of tour operators to both international and domestic tourists in the past five to six years. Viet Hai is included in their trip as a place of the tour introduced by tourism companies. In this sense, tourism companies have a fundamental role in promoting and introducing Viet Hai to become a tourist attraction. Indeed, the data provided from the Viet Hai People's committee show that Viet Hai welcomes approximately 12,000 visitors each year, including both domestic and international tourists. In 2018, the number of visitors to Viet Hai was estimated at approximately 26,000 visitors. A vast majority of these visitors bought a package tour of tourism companies. This is similar to tourism in other rural, remote areas, which is characterized by the dependence upon tour operators or intermediates to attract tourists to their destination. The tour operators, therefore, will find out a destination to meet the needs of tourists as well as provide products that will motivate them to purchase with the expectation that their needs will be met.

In line with the entry barriers that are analyzed in the previous part, the strong reliance on tour operators to develop tourism of Viet Hai villagers can be seen as a result of the difficulties in the capital (i.e. financial capital, human capital, built capital) and remoteness. In other words, small tourism business at local level is highly dependent on other channels of tourism distribution that help them to find a new market and encourage local tourism development as other rural areas.

Being located in the Northern tourism zone, Viet Hai is introduced by tourism companies as a destination in the Ha Long Bay voyage. The tour can be Ha Noi – Ha Long – Cat Ba - Viet Hai or Ha Noi – Cat Ba – Viet Hai. Unfortunately, the exact number of tour operators coming to Viet Hai is not officially gathered by the local government. Therefore, this research can only use data from interviewing one tourist guide. This person estimated 30 tourism companies are operating their tour in Viet Hai. Top companies are Bhaya- the Cruise Company (Công ty cổ phần thương mại và dịch vụ du thuyền, Bhaya-Âu Cơ), Stellar of the Seas (Công ty du thuyền Stellar), Pelican Ha Long – Cat Ba cruise joint-stock company (Công ty cổ phần thương mại dịch vụ du thuyền Cát Bà Pelican), Trails of Indochina (Công

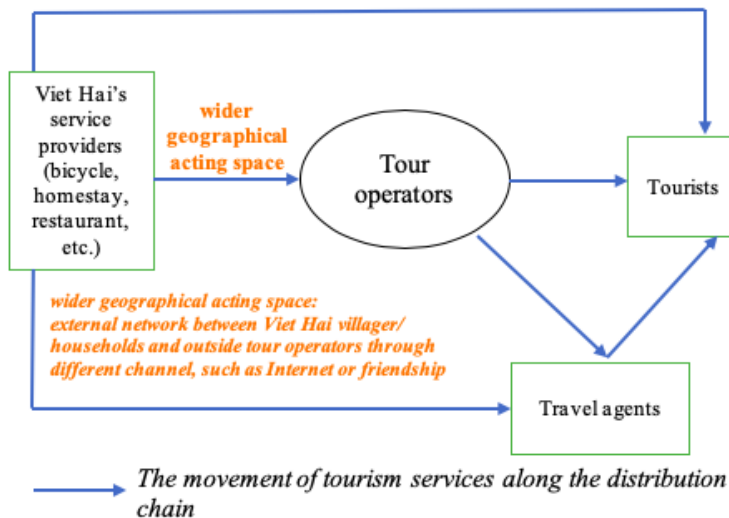
ty đường mòn di sản Đông Dương), and Lan Ha Xanh Company (Công ty Cổ phần thương mại và dịch vụ Lan Hạ Xanh). Interestingly, none of these big companies is located in Viet Hai. They all come from other big cities such as Hai Phong, Ha Noi and Quang Ninh. Recently, there is only one small-scale local tourism company named Viet Hai xanh service trading joint-stock company that has been established.

Searching for information related tours and services provided by this local company and other big companies outside Viet Hai on their websites<sup>[1]</sup> (for example: Bhaya- the Cruise Company and Stellar of the Seas) shows interesting points. While Viet Hai Xanh company focuses more on promoting tours in Viet Hai village only (e.g. ½ day tour to explore Cat Ba National Park, 2-day tour exploring Cat Ba National Park, Viet Hai – Ben beo, Viet Hai to monkey island) specializing in providing bike rental, accommodation, restaurant, bigger companies of Bhaya- the Cruise Company and Stellar of the Seas mostly include Viet Hai as one stop in their tour.

For example, the 3-day-voyage through Gulf of Tonkin on Luxury Cruise on the Au Co of Bhaya- the Cruise company, tourists will visit Viet Hai on day two as an off-board activity. In Viet Hai, tourists are introduced to riding a bicycle in the serene. It is written on the website as follows: *“Viet Hai village is absolutely the most significant destination to visit with the stunning serene surrounding. Choose your favourite way to reach the central part of Viet Hai while enjoying the beauty in ordinary by walking, biking, or paying for a round-trip seat on a trolley”*. This tour costs US\$423 per person. The price includes welcome drink, 3 Days/ 2 Nights cruise in Halong Bay, 02-night stay in tourist’s chosen cabin type (air-conditioned and en-suite), all entrance and sightseeing fees, complimentary use of Kayaks and bicycle to explore Viet Hai village, excursion as indicated in the cruise program, 02 Lunches, 02 Dinners, 02 Breakfasts and onboard insurance, tax and service charges. As can be from both local tour operators and outside tour operators, bike rental is one of the most popular tourism services in Viet Hai. The position of a tour operator and the presence of GAS in the packaging tourism system in Viet Hai is displayed in the following figure 4.2.



**Figure 0.2. The position of tour operator and the presence of GAS in the packaging tourism system in Viet Hai**



**Source: adapted from Holloway (1998); Budeanu (2005) and modified by the author based on interviews at Viet Hai**

As can be seen from figure 4.2, tourism service suppliers in Viet Hai are connected with tourists through tour operators or tourism companies. More specifically, service providers in the figure refers to local households who directly get engaged in tourism as a household-business, providing multiple services such as bicycle rental, tram rental, accommodation, restaurant and retail distributor. As an intermediary, the function of tourism operators is purchasing tourism service in bulk from direct involvement household (e.g. bicycle provider), including and introducing it in the schedule of package tour, and after that tour operators sell it directly to tourists or through a travel agent (adapted from Budeanu, 2005). Budeanu also argued that although nowadays the increasing popularity of many platforms such as booking.com or tourists may contact service providers may impact on tour operators, tour operators cannot be replaced because they can bring potential benefits for both providers and customers.

In particular, tour operators may “take the burden of selling the products by buying in bulk and absorbing the risks of having unsold products”. Furthermore, tour operators can help tourists to find their favorite trip in the easiest, fastest way for a good price. It can be concluded that in rural, remote areas such as Viet Hai, local tourism

businesses highly or almost totally depend on tour operators who greatly impact on how leisure products are distributed and sold.

The role of geographical space is presented in the connection between Viet Hai's service providers and the outside tour operators. Local people who have wider acting space will have more collaboration with outside tour operators. The result of the interview reveals that local households and local individuals who directly get involved in tourism activities through running their own business have a wider GAS than those who indirectly get engaged in tourism and those who do not get engaged in tourism. In other words, these directly involved households, individuals try to create more opportunities for them to involve in tourism activities through building networks with outside tour operators and investors through different channels, such as their friendship, their relatives or on the Internet. As a result, they can directly join tourism activities as a service provider.

The directly involved household widens their GAS by mostly utilizing their friendship. For instance, they have a friend who already has collaboration with a tourism company. This friend then introduces local people with a tourism company. They sign a contract to make sure that local business will provide service for the company following their requests. One of the interviewees who built the first homestay in the region mentioned how he started his own business with the assistance of his friend in Ha Noi. Thanks to this relationship, he can receive not only investment but also a constant number of tourists coming to his homestay. Apart from friendship, some interviewees said that another channel of local people to contact tourism companies is through the Internet or a broker as the interviewee L2.

Reports from two following local interviewees who run their business in tourism as a multiple provider of bicycles, food, retail distribution and souvenir are also examples of how direct involving household widen their GAS through friendship:

*"Our household business highly depends on the tour operator in the sense of how many tourists that they can provide. All of the households here are running the same model. We have different ways to find out as many tour operators as possible. In my case, I have been introduced to the tour operators through my friends and friends of friends too. We make a deal directly with the tour operators, not directly with tourists. There is rarely the case we make a deal with tourists*

*directly. For example, in this month, the tour operators help us 200 tourists, then we will provide 200 bicycles for these tourists and get rent money for these 200 bicycles from the tour operators at the end of that month, not from the tourists because tourists already paid it in their package tour.*

**(Interviewee L4, 2020)**

Another interviewee who is also one of 15 households in CBT program continues to elaborate the above comments as follows:

*“A vast majority of tourists come to Viet Hai by package tour of tourism companies. The number of tourists who travel alone to Viet Hai is very small. Therefore, in Viet Hai, you have money but if you do not have your own tour, your business cannot survive. You need to have many contacts with other people if you want to run your own tourism business. In other words, you need a wide social network that can bring many chances for you to have not only investment but also a large and constant number of tourists. We actually directly connect with these tourism companies from a big city such as Ha Noi, Quang Ninh to include our houses as a stop to visit when their tourists come to Viet Hai; or we can indirectly make a deal with them through brokers. Another way, if we have money, we can buy a number of tourists from a tourism company. I am not sure but some households here follow this way”*

**(Interviewee L2, 2020)**

The above statement of two interviewees who directly get involved in tourism activities in Viet Hai shows how much their businesses depend on tour operators as well as how they have created their GAS through building alliances with tour operators. All of the interviewees report that tourism in Viet Hai is almost totally dependent on tour operators, along with the importance of financial capital. According to the participants, tour operators play a crucial role in providing tourists to maintain their business, otherwise “it cannot survive” as the way a majority of interviewees mentioned. Building the collaboration with tour operators or a wider GAS through their friendship or a broker. Creating a GAS plays a fundamental role in establishing, maintaining and even defining the trend in tourism of Viet Hai. As interviewee L4 mentioned, the number of bicycles provided by her business for tourists depends on the number of tourists she can receive from tour operators. Indeed, riding bicycles is included in all tours, local people are tending to expand their business in bicycle rental. As a result,

the number of bicycles in the area witnessed an increase from 150 bicycles in 2015 to 250 bicycles in 2018.

Apart from acting as an intermediary in tourism distribution channel as other rural areas, in case of Viet Hai, there is an emerging situation in which tour operators move beyond the primitive role of an intermediaries to be an important tourism investor, which can be understood in a case of local interviewee who directly get involved in tourism activities. Her household collaborates with one tourism company and agrees to let this company repair, construct and decorate everything on their land to create an environment for tourists of this company to explore and enjoy when they visit Viet Hai. In addition, the company imposes a regulation that the household is not allowed to let tourists from other tourism companies visit their house. In exchange, this household can earn money as monthly rent with around seven million VND per month (~300 USD/month) and directly sell their products (i.e. souvenir, alcohol, beverage) for tourists who purchased tours from this tourism company only. The interviewee of this household believes that this collaboration is a win-win situation in which they can earn an amount of money from land rent and in turn, tourism companies can utilize available land for their business.

Besides this household, there is another household who already signed the contract with Au Co tourism company and the still ongoing process of construction. Her son and daughter in law are working in a big tourism company. Their GAS in the tourism industry and their good conditions for tourism development has attracted the attention of the tourism company to rent their land to develop tourism.

One more case is a person who leased her land for an individual investor through the introduction of her relatives. However, rather than running her own business in tourism, she still gets engaged in forestry. In this case, she also receives money from land rental.

In contrast, there is another picture for indirect participants and non-participants in tourism employment in Viet Hai. Although indirect participants are considered as a participant in tourism activities, their involvement is irregular, seasonal and sustainable. If a wider GAS can bring more chances for local people to directly engage in tourism through collaboration with tour operators, in the case of non-participants and indirect participants in tourism, the narrow GAS is one of their obstacles. Interviewees who belong to these groups were keeping mentioning the

reason why they cannot run their own tourism business in Viet Hai is they do not have the collaboration with tour operators as other households. Some interviewees even considered this obstacle is the most important reason, instead of lack of capital as usual.

*“In the case of our household, if we want to directly get engaged in tourism as a local tourism business, we have to contact tour operators. We may manage the financial constraints, but it is not the case for the number of tours you are given from tour operators. We will invest in tourism only if we are able to collaborate with tour operators. In other words, you need tourists who come and use tourism services that you offer. You will have your tourists by making a contract with tour operators”.*

**(Interviewee L24, 2020)**

Similar to the above interviewee, many other non-participants believe that even in case they have money, they can build the homestay or a restaurant but without the assistance from tour operators, they cannot maintain their business for long. A number of interviewees gave several typical examples to support their arguments. In the village, some households used to provide accommodation for tourists but later on, had to quit due to the lack of tourists. Therefore, not only people who are directly involved in tourism but also people who indirectly get engaged in tourism and non-participants, all recognize the fundamental role of the collaboration with tour operators in involvement in tourism activities. The difference in GAS has impacted local households' abilities to directly get engaged in tourism activities. Generally, local households who directly get engaged in tourism have wider GAS with more opportunities to collaborate with tour operators while local households who are indirect involvement and non-involvement have difficulties in building relation with tour operators due to narrower GAS.

The high dependence on outsiders, especially outside tourism companies of rural residents is also figured out in the research of Thai (2018), in his work on livelihood Pathways of Indigenous People in Vietnam's Central Highlands. Ethnic people in Central Highlands mostly showed their preference to be a passive involvement in local tourism development in which they “will be hired or told what to do”, rather than the establishment of local business by themselves. In other words, they are waiting for “a tourism company to come here to open a tourism company” for them. In the case study of Viet Hai village, although local

people do not clarify if they want or do not want to be hired, we can see that Viet Hai villagers also wait for outside investors and outside tourism companies to come to the village to support, aid and help them overcome barriers and get involved in tourism employment. The great reliance on outsiders leads to the popularity of private business run by outsiders and cooperative business in Viet Hai and Central Highlands of Vietnam as well. Particularly, in the form of private business run by outsiders, similar to two households in Viet Hai, ethnic groups in Kon Tum, Vietnam also lease their land for tourism companies to build homestays in condition that tourism companies have to respect and preserve the customs of the community.

### ***Bonding social capital in the form of kinship and family network***

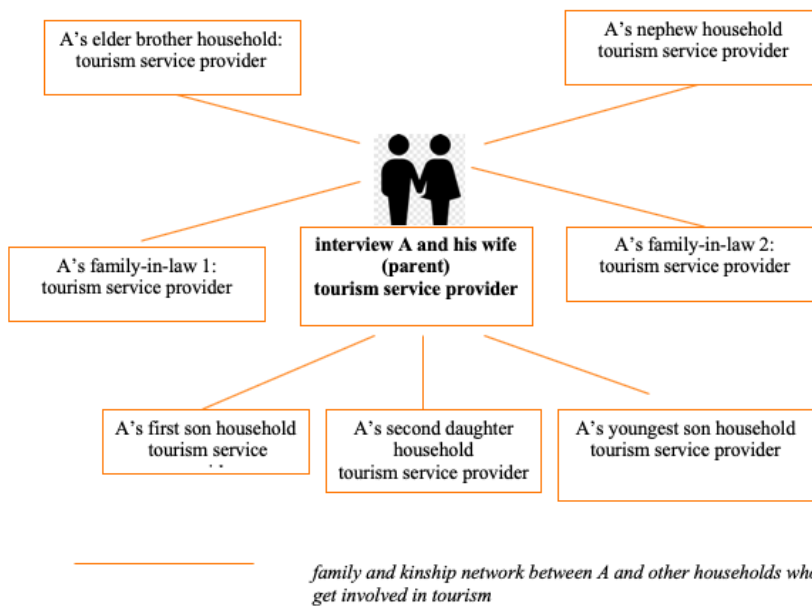
Kinship is seen as a basic factor in organizing social relations. Kinship is a form of bonding social capital that refers mainly to the formation of relatively homogeneous social groups. Therefore, “kinship” is seemingly a static and “natural” category since it is usually understood in terms of “blood relationship”.

Local interviewees, especially individuals who do not take part in tourism activities and villagers who indirectly get involved in tourism reveal that bonding social capital, in the form of family and kinship networks is one of the key factors of village involvement in tourism. The role of family and kinship networks is becoming more significant in a small, remote and rural area as Viet Hai where the blood relationship is predominant in the relationship between villagers. This is consistent with the definition of rurality in chapter 2. One of the main characteristics of rural society is the community, social fields involving few but multiple role relationships, and close-knit networks.

As for households who directly get involved in tourism activities, many of them have a blood relationship, according to interviewees. Figure 4.3 illustrates an example of family and kinship network between direct involvement households in tourism development in Viet Hai village. In case of interviewee A, he and his wife are tourism service providers (beverages and souvenirs) in Viet Hai, and they have three children. A has been engaged in tourism activities for almost ten years. His first son’s household is engaged in tourism directly as a homestay owner, his second daughter is also directly involved in tourism as a shop owner and his youngest son is a tourism service provider. Not only A’s children, A’s relatives (nephew and elder brother) also are also direct

participants in tourism activities in Viet Hai. In addition, A's family-in-law 1 and A's family-in-law 2 take part in tourism activities too. The same model can be seen in other households in Viet Hai. That is why among interviewees who are running their own business, some of them are mother-daughter kinship or mother-son kinship.

**Figure 0.3. An example of family and kinship network between direct involvement households in tourism development in Viet Hai**



**Source: interviewees, 2020**

Family and kinship network also exist in the relation between household/ individual who directly joins in tourism and household/ individual who indirectly gets involved in tourism. In other words, taking advantage of family and kinship networks, there is a close linkage between direct involvement and indirect involvement group at both household and individual level in which direct involvement brings more chances for their relatives to have a job in tourism as an indirect involvement.

At household level, one of the purposes of community programs in Viet Hai is that the government expects 15 registered households to share their tourists together if their places are full. According to interviewees, this happens mostly between the households who have the same blood. A great number of interviewees reports that they usually share their tourists to other homestays who are their kinship. Therefore,

their kinship would be the first priority. At the individual level, the essential role of kinship in the process of participating in tourism of Viet Hai villagers can be recognized in the group of people who are indirectly involved in tourism. An interviewee who can be considered an indirect participant states that:

*“I decide to borrow 100 million VND (~4291 USD) from my sister to buy an electric golf car to serve tourists when they visit Viet Hai. My passengers are introduced to me by my younger brother. He (the younger brother) already made a deal with tour operators about the number of tourists. Then he calls me to share the tourists with him. He owns one tram. I have one too. I will receive 300, 000 to 400,000 for one round of driving.”*

**(Interviewee L1, 2020)**

The answer from the above interviewees who directly get engaged in tourism as a tram driver about why and how he decided to borrow money to buy a tram shows how important the kinship is. He has a reason to borrow a large amount of money to be engaged in tourism as a driver. The kinship he has with his younger brother makes him feel confident to join tourism activities even though he lacks financial capital. His younger brother who has a direct collaboration with the tourism company is able to create a new opportunity for him to get involved in tourism activities in the village. Another example is the blood kinship between homestay owners, restaurant owner and homestay part time or full-time worker and food providers of restaurants. In these cases, family and kinship networks play an important role as a necessary condition for individuals to directly or indirectly take part in tourism employment. However, talking this way does not mean that all of the people whose relatives are directly working in tourism can take part in tourism too. There are some interviewees who have their relatives who are running tourism business but these interviewees cannot get involved in tourism due to other barriers such as financial constraints or how much close between relatives and other personal reasons.

Parallel to the narrow GAS, the weak bonding and bridging social capital also poses obstacles for local people in the way of participating in tourism. This entry barrier is mostly reported by people who are non-participants.

The following interviewees shared as follows:



*“In this village, if you want to run your own business, you must have your relatives and maternal kinship. In my case, I do not have any relatives or kinship here, I am kind of alone, I can be knocked out right away. Most of the people here have the same blood....*

*..... In Viet Hai, they (the households directly get involved in CBT) all have their own tourists from tour operators. It is very hard to see them share it with others. So, there is no so-called CBT in Viet Hai”.*

**(Interviewee L14, 2020)**

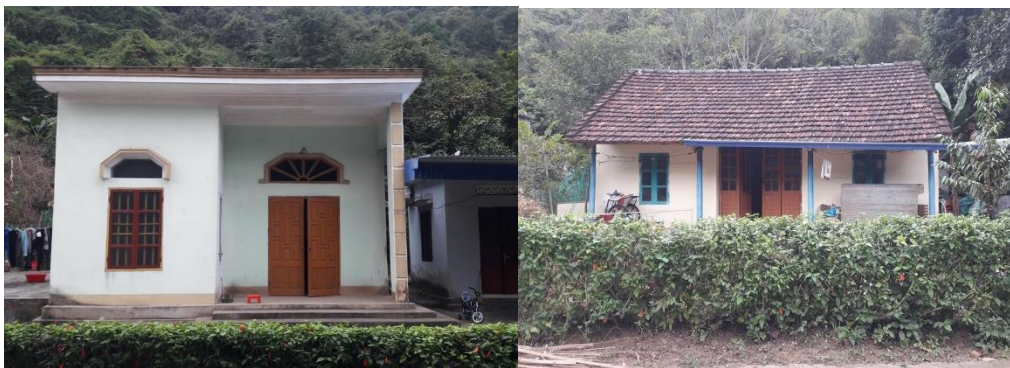
As can be seen from the answer of this interviewee, she shows her feeling of being marginalized from the development of tourism and CBT programs in the region due to the weak bonding social capital under the form of family and kinship networks. Kinship network, therefore, on the one hand, can bring more chances for a group of local people but on the other hand, it can prevent other small groups of villagers from participating in tourism. These small groups of people are afraid of being “knocked out” in the development of tourism and CBT if they get involved in tourism. This is one of the interesting findings that has not been exposed in the previous studies. Since CBT aims to increase the number of local people to get involved in tourism and the community in CBT especially focuses on the ability to include the marginalized and disadvantaged people in local, so the purpose of CBT is likely unrealistic for the small groups of local people who do not belong to the homogeneous group.

In a remote area as Viet Hai with the predominance of kinship networks among villagers, family and kinship networks are one of the factors determining the ability to take part in tourism of local people. While strong kinship and family network is considered to bring advantages for a group of local people to directly or indirectly get involved in tourism, weak kinship and family network is seen as a difficulty for others to be a part of tourism employment in the village. Compared to the result of previous research on tourism development in Central Highlands of Vietnam (Thai, 2018), although Thai does not examine the same notion of kinship as this research, he also pointed out that “When participating in tourism activities, local people prefer to share job opportunities with their relatives first”, particularly in case of Lak District.

**Figure 0.4. Households that directly participate in tourism,  
members of CBT**



**Figure 0.5. Households who indirect or non-participant in tourism,  
not a member of CBT**



## **Chapter 5 Contribution of tourism to local, rural development**

Viet Hai has been engaged in tourism for an average of 20 years, especially over the past 3-4 years, and has become popular with foreign tourists. Additionally, the CBT program has been implemented in the region since 2018. Therefore, one question that should be given an answer is how tourism contributes to the local, rural development in the village, in relation with rural transformation and a set of 19 criteria of New Rural Development issued on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 under Decision No.800 of the Prime Minister. This set of 19 criteria includes one criterion of planning and planning implementation; socio-economic infrastructure includes 8 criteria of transportation, irrigation, electricity, school, cultural infrastructure, rural market place, post office, housing; economic and production organization consists of four criteria of income, poor household, labor structure, forms of production organization; culture-society-environment is divided into four criteria of education, health care, culture, environment, and political system has two criteria of social-political system, social security. An additional question is how local people perceive the effectiveness of the CBT program so far.

Generally, local residents report the impacts of tourism on local development in both negative and positive sides. Local people who see the costs rather than benefits will lean toward the dark side while people who perceive more profits from tourism will show their preference for the bright side and as a result, they will support the development of tourism (John, 1990; Lankford, 1994; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004; Jackson, 2008; Chen & Chen, 2010). Similar to small-scale rural tourism in many rural areas in Vietnam such as Ha Long Bay (Pham, 2012), in case of Viet Hai, the result of interviewing discloses the support of villagers to tourism development and their willingness to get involved in tourism. Therefore, rather than the negative impacts of tourism on local development, interviewees spent more time talking about how much tourism has contributed to local, rural development at different levels from individual to the whole community than how tourism exerts the negative side effects on local development. In particular, the contribution of tourism in increasing living standards for local people through financial and non-financial contribution. All of this analysis is linked to the different forms of local involvement in tourism that have been

examined in chapter 4. It finds out the disparities in living standard among local villagers. Thus, although tourism in general, CBT in particular has brought common benefits to local people for the purpose of local, rural development, it has created the gap among local people

### **5.1. Community based tourism, effective or not?**

In order to analyze the effectiveness of CBT in Viet Hai, first and foremost, the term has to be defined. CBT is defined by the Vice Chairman from the Viet Hai People's Committee as a program that connects local households together to develop local tourism. It focuses on the support between households in a way that they will share their tourists with other households. In addition, they can share their experience on tourism, which will help to build a strong and united community. The CBT model is designed in order to bring common benefit for local development.

The CBT program in Viet Hai is still at the beginning stage where it still has a number of issues. Therefore, a majority of interviewees reported the ineffectiveness of CBT program in Viet Hai. Interviewees who are members of CBT point out the weak collaboration between registered households in CBT. This weak connection is also perceived by non-participant and indirect participants of CBT. The reason given was that the government fails to consider community as a heterogeneity, which means it is unreasonable and unrealistic to share one household's benefit to others who also directly get involved in tourism. "Unrealistic" and "ineffective" are two words that were mentioned by many interviewees.

*"Our household is a member of CBT program. CBT is introduced to connect members together and then we will support each other but so far, we have nothing. Each member used to pay money as a fund for all members and use this for travel. But after that, there is no connection at all. Now there is no such fund, but I have not seen any effectiveness of CBT. There is no way other households will agree to share their guests"*

**(Interviewee L11, 2020)**

Apart from the role of heterogeneity, interviewees also mentioned the lack of management of regular local government in CBT. In particular, he pointed out the essential role of local government in regulating CBT members to share their guests. Interviewee takes Sa Pa

– a tourist attraction in the Northern Mountain Area of Vietnam as an example. He reports:

*“The role of the local government in CBT is very important but I do not think the local government is doing well in operating CBT in this village. I used to visit Sa Pa and I think they are very successful in establishing CBT programs. Government in Sa Pa knows how many tours will visit locals and then they act as a regulator to make an order for local households who provide service to tourists. For instance, you are one of ten local households engaged in tourism services. Today is your turn to have tourists and tomorrow will be another’s turn. So, after 9 times, it will be your turn again”*

**(Interviewee L3, 2020)**

As the above interviewees mentioned, he believes that local government plays a crucial role in implementing and gaining achievement of CBT model in Viet Hai. The role of local government is seen as a regulator, a manager and a supporter for CBT program in Viet Hai. This is also the case of another non-western country is China. This creates a contradiction to the ideal model of CBT in theory. In academic terms, although there is a numerous definition of CBT, the local management and local benefit is the main core of almost all definitions. “CBT is a form of tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit”. This is because in a communism country in Vietnam where local people are greatly impacted by policies of government, the crucial role of government cannot be ignored. Even in cases of CBT programs in a communism country such as Vietnam, the success of the program is closely linked to the management and support from the local government. In this sense, local governments have to be active to implement flexible policies that will create a supportive environment for local people to join tourism.

The interview compares how local governments in other tourist attractions in Vietnam such as Sa Pa act as a regulator and manager of local CBT in a way that they divide equal turns to local people of CBT program. This can be seen as an effective policy to deal with the heterogeneous characteristics of the local community. The heterogeneity is also criticized as one of the issues of CBT program by Blackstock (2005). The ineffectiveness of CBT program is also identified in the case of one interviewee who used to be a member of CBT but later on, quit the program and tourism development to re-engage in agriculture and

aquaculture. She reported that due to the absence of relation with tour operators, continuing tourism business without guests was impossible.

We can see the difference in perspective of local government and local people on the purpose and effectiveness of CBT. CBT is expected to gather local people together to help each other to develop tourism. Local government officials consider the CBT program to be gaining some achievements. The first achievement is the local government trying to increase the number of CBT members by encouraging as many registered households as possible. So far, CBT has 15 members who are local businesses in tourism. The second accomplishment is the agreement of CBT members to share their visitors who stay at their homestay with other members in CBT. However, in reality, as analyzed above, local people do not see CBT as an effective program so far.

Many interviewees who are members of CBT kept mentioning that “I do not know what kind of benefit I can gain from this program” or “I do not understand what this CBT works for”. As mentioned earlier, local people actually do not expect or have a desire to receive guests/visitors from other members of CBT because it is impossible and unrealistic as many interviewees say: “no one wants to share their benefits with you”. Rather, a number of interviewees expect CBT to be a community where they can receive support from the government and where they can learn more about tourism knowledge. Local people show their desire to participate in a tourism class or an English class to improve their knowledge and skills in tourism. Until now, according to interviewees, they had a chance to visit other tourist attractions in Vietnam's northern mountains. They also took part in one English class given by a foreigner in a short time. However, these two opportunities are provided by NGOs and outsiders. This shows the fact that the government should have more meetings with local people and listen to their comments and suggestions on the process of CBT in Viet Hai. Furthermore, it also affirms the important role of NGOs in Viet Hai in opening programs to improve skills and knowledge of local people in tourism.

In addition, the CBT model in many rural areas aims to return a small part of its revenue from tourism to community funds that will be used for mutual benefit of local development. However, this has not been observed in Viet Hai so far. In another sense of CBT which involves local households and local people in tourism development, even

disadvantaged and poor people, bringing comprehensive and collective development to locals, CBT program in Viet Hai is not effective either. Giampiccoli (2015) argued disadvantaged community members are expected to take part in CBT and gain self-reliance, sustainability, social justice and empowerment. The number of only 15 members in the CBT program identifies the low participation in CBT in Viet Hai. It is because non-member of CBT or non-participating households and indirect participating households in tourism find there are many obstacles for them to get involved in tourism. Looking back in Chapter 4, narrower acting space and weak kinship networks are two main difficulties. Overall, considering both formal and informal definition, it is clear that CBT program in Viet Hai is considered as an unsuccessful program by many interviewees.

Generally, community is the foundation of CBT program, which means tourism is developed, owned and controlled by local people. In many cases of CBT model in other developing countries, it is reported that local people are passive participation in CBT when they are not able to raise their voices or their comments are neglected, such as Kenya (Kibicho, 2003); Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary, Ghana (Eshun, 2014). According to Novelli and Gebhardt (2007), local people in developing countries seem to participate in tourism planning at a lower level, which means they are not fully considered in the decision-making process with outsiders or local governments. However, Thai (2018) used the case study of Kon K'tu Village, a village located in Central Highlands, Vietnam to prove an adverse picture about CBT model that correlates local villagers and outside tourism companies together. Particularly, tourism companies show their respect to local culture at the first stage of development and this brings opportunities to local people to be a part of tourism activities by leasing out their land to build homestay or being performers of Gong music to tourists.

The success of CBT model in Kon K'tu Village is also pointed out when local villagers are able to gain benefits from tourism and then a small part was reserved for local funds. "Tourism activities in this area present an image of one product, one community. At the moment, there is, on one side, no conflict between households when they work together, and they prefer to develop a unique CBT product for all. On another side, villagers expressed their loyalty in cooperating with the company. It sounds ideally, as the definition of CBT seems to come into practice in

this case... No egoism and no organization and high loyalty to tourism entrepreneurs are the features of this case that shows a sign of a very early step of CBT development” (Thai, 2018). Kon K’tu Village is also a counter example to the main principle of CBT which emphasizes local communities rather than external parties. The involvement of an outsider in the process of CBT therefore is seen as unallowable. Local people should be owner, manager, direct beneficiaries of local tourism (Kaur, Jawaid, & Bt Abu Othman, 2016). To some extent, CBT program in Viet Hai may consider the success case study of Kon K’tu Village in their process of developing CBT because in both case studies, local villagers are highly dependent on outsiders to develop tourism. Therefore, it is more likely that we cannot ignore the crucial role of outsiders and local government in the development of CBT in the region.

## **5.2. Economic contribution**

According to participants, rural tourism in Viet Hai is crucial for employment and income of local villagers. In particular, tourism development has brought more opportunities for local people to get involved in tourism directly and indirectly, diversifying their rural livelihood and income.

### **5.2.1. Occupational diversification**

Being absolutely separated from the outside world, years ago before the development of tourism, all of the local residents lived by their self-supply. Agricultural activities such as fishing, farming, breeding, wood collectors, bee collectors or honey collectors were the only economic activities in the area. In other words, local people survived based on the natural resources. Their sources of food and income came from nature.

The increasing number of tourists, especially international tourists who purchase a package tour to visit Viet Hai has changed the path of tourism development and related jobs in the region. In line with this, new job opportunities directly and directly related to tourism have been generated in Viet Hai. A specific group in Viet Hai has taken advantage of wide GAS, strong family and kinship networks and other favorable conditions to get involved in tourism. As a result, jobs are diversified from farming to souvenir sellers, tram drivers, bicycle providers, accommodation providers, agricultural product providers, a part-time or full-time worker in other households’ businesses. All of the



participants reported that since tourism has emerged in the region, especially over the past 3-4 years, the occupation of local residents has been diversified as the way this interviewee described it:

*“Tourism really helps to improve the quality of life of local people in Viet Hai. Since tourism has emerged, we (local people) can sell our agricultural products for tourists or the local restaurants. For example, we can earn money from selling chickens or fruits, such as jack fruits. In the household who run their own business, they can earn money by selling souvenirs, beverages or providing accommodation for tourists. Therefore, it is true if we say that thanks to tourism, occupation and source of income in Viet Hai are diversified”.*

**(Interviewee L17, 2020)**

The above statement is the common answer for other respondents when they were asked about how tourism has changed the life of local people. Although tourism is not a predominant source of income for all villagers, at some point, it is perceived as a tool that generates an increasing number of sources of income for them as side jobs. In the past, if the agricultural productions were only used for self-supply, due to the rising demands of tourists and local restaurants, local people then can earn money from the development of tourism. At the present time, the villagers directly organize services for tourists under the form of eating, staying at home or providing bicycles. After a day of sightseeing or trekking, tourists can have a nice meal cooked with fresh vegetables in the village. At this point, it is obvious that tourism has a significant contribution to the rural transformation in this remote, rural area.

One of the most important characteristics of rural transformation in Vietnam as well as in other developing countries is the diversification in productivity and livelihoods by expanding decent off-farm employment. Tourism in this sense can be seen as successfully creating employment opportunities for a number of local people. The model of integrating tourism and agriculture together has been effective in a remote, rural area as Viet Hai. The role of tourism in offering more jobs for rural inhabitants is related to one of the main characteristics of tourism that is the involvement of multi-level labor. Tourism requires a high skilled employment who is responsible for managers in hotels, sales, marketing and so forth. On the other hand, tourism, especially tourism in rural areas, opens more positions that call for low-skilled labor. This obviously gives local, rural people opportunities to do these simple

works since most rural people face difficulties in high technology or professional work. It is even more visible in a remote island as Viet Hai where remoteness is one of the hardest obstacles.

Additionally, it is easy to recognize the absence of tour guides, a conventional tourism related occupation in any tourist attraction. This is because tourists come here mostly following a package tour of a tourism company. Therefore, these tourism companies already provide at least a tour guide for tourists. In addition, there is a lack of younger people in Viet Hai who have enough skills, especially English that can help to communicate with international tourists. Thus, the job of being a tour guide in Viet Hai is rare.

#### **5.2.2. Income from tourism and improvement of infrastructure**

In line with job generation for local, rural areas, increase and diversification of income are also recognized by interviewees as one of financial contributions of tourism. All interviewees gave the same answer for the question of how tourism impacts on local income. They all think that direct engagement in tourism activities has brought better financial benefit. Most interviewees who directly get involved in tourism also agreed that their income has increased, compared to what they earned in the past from agriculture and aquaculture. For example, one interview reports as follows:

*“Since I started to get engaged in tourism as a tram driver, earning money for me seems to become easier compared to the past. In the past, it was hard for me to make a living because my job highly relied on the weather. In bad weather, particularly if a disaster happens, I cannot go to the forest to collect bees and honey or grow any kind of vegetables. In contrast, now I am a driver who takes tourists around the village when they come here, no matter how bad the weather is, I still can earn some money. Therefore, my income is a bit better”.*

**(Interviewee L1, 2020)**

The above interviewee pointed out how tourism helps him to improve his household's income. Unlike the high dependence on weather of agriculture with unsustainable income, tourism can provide a more regular income with a decreasing dependence on weather and multiple tourism services. A number of other interviewees who are also directly engaged in tourism reported the same answer. Some of them said that by running their own business in tourism, they started to have money to build a new and better house, new motorbike and better food for daily

meals. Indeed, all of the interviewees reported that due to the bad weather and condition for rice cultivation, recently, many local people stopped growing paddy rice and found new jobs to make a living. They all showed their opinion that farming is not productivity anymore and consequently, they grow a lot but cannot earn much money from that. This can be seen in the statement of an interviewee:

*“Prior to the time when tourism was not developed as present time, rice cultivation was the only economic activity in the village. All the land was covered by paddy fields. However, everything has changed. Now, pesticide, fertilizer and such things for farming are much more expensive. Additionally, due to this village being surrounded by the middle juggle forest of National Park, there are a lot of rice pests that will damage our paddy field. You can imagine we just need to buy 1 kg of rice with 13,000 VND (~0.56 USD) but we have to invest a large amount of money for rice cultivation. Therefore, currently, many villagers tend to collect various types of seafood such as small crabs or snails manually or do aquaculture”.*

**(Interviewee L15, 2020)**

As the above interviewee states, instead of doing farming economic activities, Viet Hai villagers are diversifying their employment and sources of income by transforming from farming to catching seafood, doing aquaculture and tourism. We can also see how different it is between the diversification in economy between Viet Hai and other rural areas on the mainland. If rural people in the mainland mostly stop getting involved in farming economic activities and start to work at a factory, the different picture can be seen in Viet Hai, a commune on Cat Ba island and is isolated from the outside world due to its distant locality. Without factory or industrial activities, local people still depend on nature to diversify their source of income. Tourism in this case, somehow can reduce the dependence of local people on natural resources by providing occupations for local people such as being a full-time or part-time worker in homestay, restaurant or a driver as the interviewee mentioned above. Tourism is gradually becoming the side job of local people to earn some more living. Tourism in this case can help to expand business opportunities for local people under the form of small enterprises. Indeed, according to Viet Hai People committees, in 2019, it is reported that after 1 year of CBT establishment, there was an increase in the number of facilities for the purpose of tourism in 15 registered households. After 1

year of establishment, 15 registered households of CBT owned 18 rooms for tourists, 5 restaurants, 7 shops, 5 trams, 250 bicycles, 1 cano, 2 kayak boats. In 06/ 2019, these numbers rose to a total of 7 accommodation providers with 40 rooms, 8 restaurants, 10 shops, 7 tram, 385 bicycles, 9 shops, 3 canoes and 05 kayak boats. This increasing number can be used to illustrate the growth of small enterprises in the region.

The aforementioned data and statement of interviewees show the multi-source of income one household who is a direct participant in tourism may earn. For this group, they can earn money directly from the expenditure of tourists locally by providing different services, namely accommodation provider (homestay is the most important), transport provider (bicycle, cano, kayak, tram), retail distribution, restaurant, souvenir, traditional drink. Among these diverse sources of income from tourism, interviewees usually took providing bicycles as a typical example of increasing and sustainable source of income from tourism. This can be explained by the high demand for bicycles from tour operators as bike riding is a popular out-door activity in many package tours to Viet Hai. The price to rent one bicycle ranges from 40,000 VND (approximately 1.8 USD) to 50,000 VND (~2.2 USD) per tourist. Local providers often take money from bicycle rental from tour operators whom they have contracts with. Spending my time in Viet Hai during the fieldwork and observing daily life of local people, households who have collaboration with tour operators always welcome their tourists at a certain time every single day. The average number of tourists ranged from 10 to 15 tourists. Since these households have tourists from package tours come to rent their bicycles, they also sell beverages, snacks and souvenirs for tourists who want to buy it. Therefore, compared to bicycle rental, retail distribution is recognized by local people to have less contribution to increase income.

As for interviewees who are local business in accommodation provider, they tend to answer the question related to income into two ways: on the one hand, some of them mention the seasonality of tourism and said that they do not have many tourists during off season and they have to do additional agricultural activities such as cooking wine, feeding livestock, seafood collector in their free time and off-season. In contrast, a number of households believe that there is no seasonality of tourism because they always have package tourists come to their place. They are even too busy to do any additional activities. This again shows

the important role of tour operators in maintaining the development of local tourism business. Similar pictures can be seen in case of restaurants who have to deal with tour operators to make sure that they will have a regular number of tourists come to their restaurant.

Table 5.1 gives information on estimated household income of interviewees. Although all interviewees did not give an exact number of their income from tourism, some of them did estimate their income. The highest income derived directly from tourism is given by a homestay owner is tens of millions of VND per month. Some said that they earn 20 million VND per month or 10 million VND per month (~ 858 USD or 429 USD)

Others who do not give an exact answer usually use an adjective to describe their income from tourism is low or it is sufficient for them to live in Viet Hai. Tourism is the main source of income for almost all interviewee's households who directly get involved in tourism. Besides, there is only one special case (no. L26) who do not participate in tourism, but tourism is the main source of income because his husband is directly engaged in tourism as a boat driver. For interviewees who indirectly get engaged in tourism, their income is a combination of tourism and other economic activities (mostly agriculture, aquaculture and seafood collector) in which they reported that the income from tourism is unsteady and minimal.

**Table 5.1. Estimated household income of interviewees**

<b>No</b>	<b>Year Gap</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Form of participation (individual level)</b>	<b>Member of CBT (household level)</b>	<b>Household income</b>
<b>L1</b>	40s	M	Direct	N	~> 8 million VND/month (~> 343 USD)
<b>L2</b>	50s	M	Direct	Y	Much higher than income from agriculture
<b>L3</b>	80s	M	Direct	Y	
<b>L4</b>	30s	F	Direct	Y	
<b>L5</b>	30s	M	Direct	Y	Highest income is tens of millions of VND (~> 1000 USD)
<b>L6</b>	30s	F	Direct	Y	~> 10 million VND/month (~> 429 USD)
<b>L7</b>	50s	F	Direct	N	~4-5 million VND/month (~171-214 USD)
<b>L8</b>	60s	F	Direct	Y	~10-15 million VND/month (~429-643 USD)
<b>L9</b>	60s	F	Direct	Y	Sufficient for living
<b>L10</b>	60s	F	Direct	Y	
<b>L11</b>	50s	F	Direct	Y	Regular income from tourism
<b>L12</b>	60s	F	Direct	Y	Low
<b>L13</b>	40s	F	Direct	Y	Sufficient for living
<b>L14</b>	60s	F	Indirect (food provider, construction worker)	N	Average income ~ 2 million VND/ month (~85 USD)

<b>L15</b>	60s	F	Indirect (vegetable provider)	N	~6-7 million VND/month (~257-300 USD)
<b>L16</b>	50s	F	Indirect (land for lease, wine provider)	N	Sufficient for living
<b>L17</b>	60s	F	Indirect (seasonal worker, wine provider)	N	~3 million VND/month (~129 USD)
<b>L18</b>	50s	F	Indirect (vegetable provider)	N	~1 million VND/month (~42 USD)
<b>L19</b>	40s	M	Indirect (construction worker)	N	Sufficient for living
<b>L20</b>	30s	M	Non	N	Sufficient for living
<b>L21</b>	30s	F	Non	N	Low
<b>L22</b>	50s	M	Non	N	~> 5 million VND/month (~> 214 USD)
<b>L23</b>	30s	F	Non	N	~10 million VND per month (~429 USD)
<b>L24</b>	40s	F	Non	N	~6-13 million VND per month (~257-558 USD)
<b>L25</b>	30s	F	Non	N	~5 million VND/month (~214 USD)
<b>L26</b>	30s	F	Non	N	~10 million VND/month (~429 USD)
<b>L27</b>	60s	M	Non	N	Millions of VND/month (~> 100 USD)

<b>L28</b>	60s	F	Non	N	~0-600 thousand VND/day (~0 – 25 USD)
<b>L29</b>	40s	F	Non	N	Millions of VND per month (~thousands of USD)
<b>L30</b>	40s	M	Non	N	~> 5 million VND/month (~> 214 USD)
<b>L31</b>	30s	F	Non	N	~> 4 million VND/month (~> 171 USD)
<b>L32</b>	30s	F	Non	N	Sufficient for living

*Note: Gender – M (Male), F (Female); Member of CBT (household level) – Y (Yes), N (No)*

**Source: interviewees, 1/2020**

Another economic contribution of tourism in Viet Hai is the improvement of infrastructure and facilities in the region. While occupational diversification and income is an individual benefit, the upgrade of local road, electricity is seen as a collective contribution to all local villagers.

*“Since tourism has developed in the region, this village has witnessed many significant changes. For example, all of the infrastructure in the village, including road and electricity has been expanded and upgraded. In the past, the road was small and dirty. There were a few households that did tourism when the road was still narrow, no electricity, no clean water. Then tourism has been emerged and the government invests in infrastructure for the purpose of tourism development in the region”*

**(Interviewee L21, 2020)**

As the interview L21 reports, tourism development has significantly improved the quality of common infrastructure for local people through the support of the Government of Cat Hai District. These supportive policies aim to help local people in remote areas to have better infrastructure and therefore can create a better environment for tourism



development in the village. All other interviewees also state that their life in the past was extremely poor without concrete road and electricity. They had to walk on the rock, mud road, and live in mud houses. Since concrete roads and electricity have been operated in the region, local people can live in much better condition. Next year, the road will be rebuilt in order to provide a better infrastructure for tourism development in the region.

### **5.3. Non-economic contribution**

Tourism development in general is believed to have socio-cultural impacts on local people. According to Smith (1995), socio-cultural impacts of tourism results from the interaction between ‘host’, or local people, and ‘guests’, or tourists (Smith, 1995). Tourism development has led to many changes in values, norms, traditional ideas, and identities resulting from tourism (Glasson et al., 1995). In Viet Hai, tourism development also brings more chances for local residents to communicate with the “outside world”, “break” the isolation of the area. Interviewees therefore always expressed their satisfaction about the development of tourism in Viet Hai since it makes them feel happier to welcome new visitors to the village. Local interviewees generally show their positive attitudes towards the presence of tourists, especially international tourists in Viet Hai. This is totally different from tourism in any tourist attraction where local people show their negative views on tourism such as increased crime, overcrowding, increased congestion or increased environmental issues such as Cat Ba island, Ha Long Bay. Common perceptions of local people towards the presence of tourists are exposed as following:

*“I like seeing tourists in Viet Hai, especially foreign tourists”.*

*“Since tourism has developed in Viet Hai, everything is renewed, Viet Hai seems to have a new appearance”*

*“I do not see any problems such as noise pollution, air pollution or littering from increasing number of tourists in Viet Hai”*

Only one interviewee raises his concern on the increase of litter in the future and one interviewee who lives nearby a homestay says that sometimes, it is a bit noisy at noon, so that she cannot take a nap. But these interviewees still show their support for tourism development in Viet Hai.

A majority of interviewees noted that apart from economic contribution, tourism has contributed to non-economic improvement, including human capital as skills and socio-cultural impacts. Interviewing local people shows that the development of tourism has helped them to improve their personal skills, particularly in the way they communicate with international tourists and become familiar with the tourism market. Most local people in Viet Hai cannot speak and understand English due to the lack of education. However, overcoming this obstacle, they gradually get used to the new environment and are able to communicate with foreign visitors to sell their products.

*“I do not know English. It is very hard for me to study it since I am getting older. Although I do not know English, I try to communicate with international tourists by using body language and other things that can help me to explain what I want to say. For example, when tourists pay money for the product they want to purchase, I cannot say its price. So, I give them the paper of money and then they know how much it is”.*

**(Interviewee L13, 2020)**

The way the above interviewees use to overcome the language barriers to communicate with international tourists is also utilized by other local people. Some interviewees said that although they cannot speak English fluently, they still can have a very simple conversation with foreign tourists. They self-study English on the Internet or from the assistance of other tour guides. In addition, local people who take part in any vocational training related to tourism and other programs organized by local government and NGOs enhanced their experiences in running tourism business. Additionally, since the number of tourists coming to Viet Hai is increasing, local governments and local households raise their awareness to always keep the environment clean for tourism development. Furthermore, tourism development is along with the development and conservation of local products such as cooking traditional wine and promoting Vietnamese culture through souvenir selling. A number of local people who are involved in tourism have increased their ability to mitigate vulnerability. In other words, tourism related jobs are considered as not as hard as farming. As interviewees says, people who are doing tourism jobs can earn (more) money without high dependence on weather. In addition, their income is earned from serving tourists at their home such as restaurants or homestays. This non-

economic contribution of tourism to local people is also examined in case study of ethnic people in Central Highlands Vietnam (Thai, 2018).

All of the above analysis gives some important points. Firstly, to a certain extent, tourism has contributed to poverty reduction of a group of local villagers. From the collective development of the whole region that is included in a set of 19 criteria of NTP-NRD the answers of interviewees reveal that to some degree, tourism has contributed to meet some criteria, including transportation, electricity, labor structure. However, for other criteria, namely income, poor households, tourism has brought different benefits for local people and local households, depending on the form each household or individual gets involved in tourism. This difference is considered as disparities in living standard among local people/local households. This unequal development will be examined in the next section.

#### **5.4. Disparities in living standard**

The difference in ability to take part in tourism activities has led to the disparities in living standard both within group and between group. In other words, there is a difference in standard of life among directly participating households and between directly participating households and indirect and non-participating households.

In the first type, the disparity that occurs within households, it mostly relates to the difference in how long their business operates, how many tours they have, the number of tourists and how much money these tourists spend on local goods. The more they buy local products, the higher income local people may earn. Particularly, comparing the household income of interviewees in table 5.1, it shows that while most of direct involvement people and households who are members of CBT reported to have much higher income than agricultural activities employment, there are a few households (L7 and L12) report to have lower income.

According to household number 7, she has a small retail shop to sell beverages for tourists. However, because she has no collaboration with tour operators, tour guides never let their tourists come and buy for her. This is a rule of tour operators for tour guides because tour guides have to lead their tourists to the shop/restaurant whom tour operators have a contract with. As for household number L12, her son just operated his own business in tourism for 1 year and so far, they have only 1 tour

come to their restaurant. Their income from tourism therefore is still low, compared to other direct involving households.

*“Because our household just has directly got involved in tourism as a shop, we have only 1 tour. Our income from tourism is not regular and my son said that it takes at least 5 years to have more income from tourism”*

**(Interviewee L12, 2020)**

Meanwhile, other households, for example, they always have tourists because these households have more tours from their tour operator. There are some interviewees also reported that they are always too busy all day long that they do not have time to do other economic activities:

*“There are many package tours that come to our shops. From morning to noon, we serve 5 packed tours. Since I started to get involved in tourism directly, I do not have any time to do other economic activities”.*

**(Interviewee L9, 2020)**

In the second type, disparities exist between direct participants and indirect, non-participants. Perception of local people on poverty reduction and tourism can be used to analyze the difference in living standard between these two groups. Originated from a very poor region in the past, Viet Hai has witnessed significant change in current time with concrete road, a system of electricity, increasing number of concrete houses, the operation of Internet, food security, sufficient education for children, access to health care and health insurance, clean water and sanitation, access to information though, TV, mobile phone and so on. These improvements in basic needs, along with increasing income indicates the decrease in multidimensional poverty index (MPI) in Viet Hai.

On November 19th, 2015, Resolution No.59, which was approved by Prime Minister about the promulgation a new MPI line applied for the period of 2016 - 2020. At the same time, all localities will apply MPI from January 1st, 2016. MPI-VN is established by MOLISA. This MPI-VN comprises both income and basic needs. Basic needs of MPI-VN include five dimensions consisting of 2 indicators in each domain are identified reflecting households' access to services, namely: education, health care, housing, clean water and sanitation; and information. (See the appendix). Since 2016, one household will be

considered as poor or non-poor based on calculating of both income and basic needs. For example, in the rural areas, poor households are those that either: (1) have per capita a monthly income equal to or less than 700,000 VND or; (2) have per capita a monthly income from above 700,000 VND (~30 USD) to 1,000,000 VND (~42 USD) and be deprived of 03/10 indicators in the MPI measurement. According to Viet Hai People's commune, the average income per person per month of Viet Hai villager is approximately 3,500,000 VND (~150 USD), higher than national poverty line. there is a decline in the number of poor households in Viet Hai over years. In 2019, There are only two poor households in Viet Hai. because they are elderly and disable person who are not able to work. For other local household, they are no longer considered as poor people and near poor people.

Interviewees were asked about their perception on poverty before their opinion on tourism and poverty reduction in the village. The result shows that participants tend to define poverty as several ways: first is to compare present and past; second is to compare Viet Hai and other poorer regions in mountainous areas; third is people are poor when they are unable to work due to health restriction, fourth is low income and food insecurity. This finding reaffirms the conclusion of Truong, et, al (2014) when they concluded the multi-dimensional facets and complexity of poverty. In their work on tourism in Sa Pa, a province in Northern mountainous areas of Vietnam, over two-thirds of ethnic interviewees defined poverty as a situation in which family members are not able to produce enough rice because paddy cultivation is predominant activities in their life while others believe that poverty is lack of income and opportunities. The current research also figured out that no interviewees mentioned multidimensional poverty when they were asked about poverty although the local government is using multidimensional poverty to measure poverty in the village. This shows the mismatch between local government and local people in understanding the term "poverty".

Despite the diverse opinion on whether Viet Hai villagers are poor or not, they all expressed the same idea that although all interviewees agree that tourism has played its role in poverty reduction in Viet Hai, it does not mean that tourism is the main contributor and for all people. In other words, we can say tourism has an essential role in poverty reduction of a number of households who directly get involved

in tourism for either long time or have regular package tours to their house. As for other household, the role of tourism in reducing poverty is minor or zero as the way the following two interviewees reports:

*“A majority of local households can be listed to have unsustainable life because only a few households are directly engaged in tourism. Since tourism has developed in the village, there are many changes, such as the road system has improved a lot. This is public benefit...In reality, local households are still very poor. They have no regular work and therefore, they are hired by aquaculture workers. However, this year, aquaculture lost output. Viet Hai is not considered as a poor village on the paperwork but in reality, villagers’ lives are unsustainable because of irregular employment.”*

**(Interviewee L27, 2020)**

Following this sense, another interviewee states:

*“In Viet Hai, if you want to be a rich household, you have to run your own business in tourism. In general, the households who directly get engaged in tourism are more developed than the others who are non-participants in tourism like us. They have higher and more regular income. In contrast, the income we earn from collecting crabs and snails is irregular and sustainable. Additionally, we have to work very hard to collect seafood. It is similar to people who do farming. Our household’s monthly income is approximately 5 million vnd (~214 USD). We have no savings and still borrow money from banks and our relatives. This television you see here we bought in on credit”*

**(Interviewee L25, 2020)**

Obviously, it is fair that for those who invest their money and effort to run their own business in the tourism industry, they can earn higher income, compared to those who do not. What we should raise our concern here is the increasing gap between direct participating households and indirect participating households, non-participating households. Rather saying life in Viet Hai is poor or not, we should consider the sustainability of their source of income. Only 15 local households directly get involved in tourism, a majority of the remaining households still get engaged in agriculture, aquaculture, seafood collector. These economic activities are highly dependent on nature and therefore, their life has become vulnerable, compared to households who run their own business in tourism and regularly receive a number of guests from tour operators. In addition, as these directly involved

households provide multiple services to tourists and directly receive money from tourists, they are also considered to have a more diverse and higher source of income.

**Table 5.2. Income gap between some selected direct involvement and non-direct involvement in tourism**

No	Household size	Form of participation	Member of CBT	Household income	Income ?	Income
<b>L6</b>	4	Direct	Y	~> 10 million VND/month (~> 429 USD)	Y	Y
<b>L8</b>	2	Direct	Y	~10-15 million VND/month (~429 - 643 USD)	Y	Y
<b>L14</b>	3	Indirect	N	Average income ~ 2 million VND/month (~85 USD)	N	N
<b>L18</b>	2	Indirect		~1 million VND/month (~42 USD)	N	N
<b>L25</b>	3	Non	N	~5 million VND/month (214 USD)	N	Y
<b>L28</b>	1	Non	N	~0-600 thousand VND/day (~0 – 25 USD per day)	N	Y

Note: Y- Yes; N – No. Form of participation and member of CBT are considered at individual and household levels, respectively.

- A= average income per capita at of rural area in Vietnam in 2018, which is 2,990,000 VND (~120 USD).
- B= national poverty line in rural area at in rural area which is 700,000 VND (~30 USD)

**Source: 32 interviewees, 2020**

Table 5.1 and table 5.2 shows the difference between direct participants in tourism and indirect, non-participants. While a majority of direct participants' income can earn approximately 10 million per month (~429 USD) and higher for those who run their business for a long time, lower income is seen in groups of indirect and non-participants in tourism. In addition, compared to monthly average income per capita of rural areas in Vietnam in 2018, it can be seen that households who directly participate in tourism and are members of CBT have an equal or higher income than households who do not get involved in tourism directly and those who are non-participant. When comparing some household income of some selected interviewees in table 5.2, we can see that two of these households are lower than the national poverty line in rural areas. They earn a small amount of money at 1 or two million per month. These people said that they are getting old to make more money and also, their income from agriculture and aquaculture greatly relies on weather. Seafood collecting is one of the main jobs of many local people recently. These people earn money by collecting seafood and totally depending on the up and down of the wave. One interviewee describes how she works as a seafood collector as follows:

*“In one month, we can collect seafood only for a certain period of 15 days, depending on the wave. But actually, we can earn money only in 6 days of that wave down. During these 6 days, if we are lucky enough and are experienced, we can earn 500 to 600 thousand VND per day (~21 USD to ~25 USD per day). The average income from collecting seafood is 100 to 200 thousand VND per day (~4.29 USD to ~8.6 USD per day). However, sometimes, we earn no money”*

**(Interviewee L28, 2020)**

The above statement of interviewees is also similar to opinion of many other interviewees who also derives their income mostly from seafood collecting work. Apart from the irregular income from aquaculture and seafood collecting work, interviewees also mention the low-paid work for indirect participants in tourism such as part-time work or full-time work in local businesses. They said in one month, these jobs are irregular, and they cannot earn much money. The increasing gap between household who directly get engaged in tourism and households who are indirect and non-involvement is also pointed out in the research of Hoang, et, al (2014) on tourism in Sa Pa, a province in the northern Vietnamese Highlands; tourism in Ha Long Bay (Pham, 2012).



Particularly, Hoang et, al (2014) concluded that in Sa Pa: “local inhabitants that potentially benefit from tourism activities are hotel and restaurant owners and shopkeepers in Sa Pa town; tour guides, and farming households that offer rooms for homestays. The tourism infrastructure is dominantly controlled by the Kinh majority, while the other minorities mainly deliver labour to run the tourism industry”. Similarly, 30.9% of interviewees in research of Pham (2012) agreed that a few people in Ha Long Bay are able to receive income benefit from tourism. Therefore, the result of this research once again strengthens the linkage between tourism and disparities among local people and local households.

## **Chapter 6 Conclusion and discussion**

### **6.1. Key findings, contribution and policy recommendations of the study**

The study examines village involvement in the tourism-rural development nexus in case study of Viet Hai village, Vietnam. Like with many rural areas in Vietnam and other developing countries, Viet Hai is witnessing a process of transformation in many aspects of life. In this situation, tourism has emerged as a tool to increase the well-being of local villagers. Although tourism has developed approximately 20 years in the village, local residents believe tourism is truly developing in the areas with the increase in the number of tourists until the start of covid-19. Viet Hai is a typical example of rural tourism that is characterized by some important features such as small establishments, much open space, strong individual activity base, locally owned businesses; much part-time involvement in tourism (Lane (2009)). There is a numerous research on tourism and rural development previously with the case study of inland rural areas. However, the research on local involvement in tourism-rural development linkages in rural, isolated areas from a geographical perspective seems to be modest. Therefore, this research aims to examine local engagement in tourism activities and the contribution of tourism to local development in Viet Hai. In addition, rather than taking the notion of CP in tourism planning, the current research focuses on local involvement in tourism employment. This is expected to diversify the case study of research on rural development and contribute to literature on development studies and rural geography. To achieve the purpose of the study, the thesis addressed two main questions: the first question focuses on how local villagers get engaged in tourism-rural development nexus and the second question asks how tourism has contributed to local, rural development in Viet Hai village. The result of a 15-day-fieldwork with a total of 40 interviews reveals some important and interesting findings.

Chapter 4 dealt with the first question on how local people get engaged in tourism. It figures out that, generally, local involvement in tourism employment in Viet Hai is classified into three groups based on their relations with tourism activities. These three groups are direct involvement, indirect and non-involvement. Although tourism has been

developed for almost 20 years in the village and the government has been implementing the CBT program for more than one year, a majority of local people/ households belong to the indirect and non-participants indicates its low direct engagement in tourism of the village. Local people have some common favorable conditions to develop tourism, such as natural beauty, a unique location, and a friendly environment. However, Viet Hai villagers have to face some common difficulties related to financial constraints, isolation, poor human resources and poor system of infrastructure. These common advantages and disadvantages for tourism development in Viet Hai are also seen in many other rural areas in Vietnam.

GAS and bonding social capital in the form of kinship and family networks are found to be determining factors impact on village involvement in tourism activities in rural, remote areas such as Viet Hai. On the one hand, the wider GAS and the strong family and kinship network can create favorable conditions for individuals and households who directly take part in tourism. Particularly, direct local people and local households find opportunities to collaborate with tour operators and outside investors as an external network through different channels such as friendship, relatives, Internet, brokers in which friendship is seen as the most popular channels. Then these direct local households can directly provide tourism services for tourists and directly benefit from tourists. In addition, local people who have a strong internet social network with their relatives also have more chances to get involved in tourism activities. This is a typical characteristic of small-scale business in rural areas where close-knit networks are very common (Lane, 2009). These household-formed businesses tend to use labor who are their family members and their relatives. On the other hand, the narrower GAS and the weak bonding social capital under the form of family and kinship network are hardships for local people to get involved in tourism. A group of local people shows their marginalized feeling in the development of tourism in Viet Hai since they cannot be a part of tourism employment due to lack of kinship networks and collaboration with tour operators who are not only intermediary but also an investor.

This has not been mentioned often in previous research on main barriers to participation in tourism in other regions in Vietnam. For example, in Sa Pa (Truong, 2014) found out that the lack of capital is the main obstacle facing ethnic people, accompanied by insufficient

business knowledge and experiences. This current research reinforces the earlier findings when Viet Hai villagers also pointed out the finance constraints, tourism related skills and knowledge shortage as their difficulties to get engaged in tourism. Besides, this research also explores the important role of two other factors, i.e. GAS and kinship network in local people's ability to get involved in tourism directly.

Chapter 5 addressed the second question on how much benefit local people can derive from tourism development. 32 local interviewees show their preference for the positive impacts of tourism to the whole community, especially in terms of improving the infrastructure system of the village, bringing a new vibe and new appearance to Viet Hai. Generally, local people believe that they can earn extra income from a variety of jobs related to tourism activities. Tourism is considered as a tool to connect the island with the outside world. However, it does not mean that tourism is seen as an effective tool to improve well-being for all villagers. This also indicates the disparities in living standard among local villagers. A majority of local interviewees believe that only local people and local households who directly get involved in tourism either for a long time or having a regular number of visitors to their houses are able to obtain much benefit from tourism. In contrast, local villagers and local households who are not able to get involved in tourism activities cannot receive much benefit from tourism as the way one interviewee says: "Tourism is developing in the village, the poor is still poor and the rich is still rich" (Interviewee L20). Local people perceive that many directly involved households have more chances to earn higher and more regular income since tourism work is not as hard as farming. Indeed, this was also reported by a number of interviewees who directly get involved in tourism. This is consistent with the finding from research of Thai (2018) on tourism in Central Highlands of Vietnam.

On the other hand, many local people who are non-involvement and indirectly involved reported their vulnerable livelihood because of the high dependence on weather as a feature of agriculture and aquaculture. The nexus between tourism and well-being of local people is examined in many previous studies. For example, Truong (2014) reveals that in Sa Pa, while private businesses run by Kinh people and local ticket counters established at village entrances are major beneficiaries of tourism, poor people can gain only a small benefit from this sector. This study, therefore, reaffirm the conclusion from many

previous research that arouse doubt on the inclusive development of tourism and the linkage between tourism and disparities as Leatherman and Marcouiller 1996, 1999 and Wagner 1997 early raised concern about the uneven allocation of benefits from tourism that creates a ‘‘hollowing out’’ of the income distribution or recent work of Hampton (2017) on tourism and inclusive growth in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam. Therefore, I believe that this research does not overstate the pivotal role of tourism in developing rural areas. Rather, it points out and emphasizes the low percentage of local involvement in tourism in a small village as Viet Hai, in relation with the fact that only a small part of local tourism business can get much benefit from tourism. Local government should pay more attention to this situation and find feasible solutions to increase the number of local households and local people working in tourism.

All of the aforementioned findings and discussion of this study have both theoretical and empirical contributions. In terms of theory, it contributes to the literature on rural geography and tourism geography. The findings of the current study reaffirm the conclusions from previous research on local engagement in tourism employment, the contribution of tourism to local development and the growing disparities among local residents. In addition, this study reveals the determining role of GAS and bonding social capital in the form of kinship and family networks in local involvement in tourism activities. These essential roles of two variables are rarely mentioned in previous studies although there is a numerous research on relation between social capital and tourism. In terms of empirical contribution, the current thesis diversifies the case study of research on tourism development in a rural, isolated area as in Viet Hai. As a result, all of the findings from this study can be useful for local governments in establishing tourism related policies in the region. Furthermore, the result of research is also meaningful to be applied in other case studies of rural areas that have some in common with Viet Hai in both isolated location and socio-economic characteristics, for example tourism development in Phu Long commune and Tran Chau commune, two other communes on Cat Ba island.

The results of this thesis derive from the interview with local people and local government officials. To some extent, it is the voice of local residents on tourism and rural development related policies. Local government should create a close linkage with other stakeholders in tourism development of Viet Hai, including private sectors, research and

institutions, especially the support from NGOs. While private sectors are seen as important actors who aid local people in terms of finance, NGOs play a crucial role in improving tourism knowledge and skills for local people. In addition, research and institutions with their own programs may bring positive changes to local life. For example, interviewees reported a recent project that is conducted by a researcher in Viet Hai. One of its programs is growing flowers in the village. Although some interviewees were not interested in this project, others showed their support for this kind of project to be carried out in Viet Hai. In my opinion, the agriculture-tourism model can be seen as a feasible model to include more local people in tourism development. It comes from the fact that agriculture and aquaculture are two important activities on this island village and natural beauty is one of the most important tourism assets of Viet Hai.

## **6.2. Further discussions and future research**

It is necessary to emphasize the duration and the number of tours one household has to develop their tourism business because it does not mean that all households who directly get involved in tourism are able to gain much benefit from tourism. In other words, tourism is not an effective tool to reduce poverty and improve well-being for all local people/ households, even those who get involved in tourism directly because there are still the cases where local people quitted their tourism jobs and return to agriculture and aquaculture. One of the interviewees who is a shopkeeper says that besides tourism, her household's income derives from cooking traditional wine and raising livestock because tourists visit Viet Hai but they do not spend much on local products. Other interviewees explained the reason why they quit the tourism business is because they do not have tourists. No one comes to their house and uses their services. Another case is that tourism requires a large investment and it takes time to pay back. Due to the fluctuation of the tourism industry, a majority of Viet Hai villagers are doing multiple jobs as mentioned in chapter 4. They will do tourism, agriculture and aquaculture at the same time. For example, when I stayed in a local homestay during my fieldwork, the host of homestay sometimes went to the coastal areas to collect seafood. In addition, she also sells products for local people such as food, shampoo. Thai (2018) found that although ethnic interviewees realize the economic potential of tourism to poverty

reduction, they still consider agriculture as their main source of income because of three main reasons, namely the moderate number of domestic tourists, the seasonal nature of tourism and the impacts of handicraft sellers. Viet Hai is similar to this case study of tourism in Central Highlands in the sense that not all local people totally rely on tourism for their income, except some households who completely spend their time in their business in tourism.

Another issue that needs to be considered is the external impacts of unexpected events on tourism, leading to the fluctuation of the tourism market and vulnerability of local business. A typical example of these factors is the impact of Covid-19 in 2020 due to the travel restrictions. Global international tourist arrivals are anticipated to decrease by 20–30% in 2020, leading to a potential loss of 30–50 billion USD, says UNWTO<sup>6</sup>. In Vietnam, international arrivals in April 2020 saw a decrease by 98.2% year-on-year<sup>7</sup>. In this situation, rural communities are seen as facing the high risk from the pandemic since this community is naturally fragile due to lack of capital and knowledge and because of the isolation. Several sectors in rural communities seem to become more vulnerable to the global slowdown such as employment services, mining/oil, gas, travel arrangements, transportation, hospitality and leisure<sup>8</sup>.

Viet Hai holds a similar picture during covid-19 pandemic. According to a local government official who is responsible for local policies in Viet Hai village, the number of tourists is expected to drastically decrease in 2020. *“During the first six months of 2020, there were only 12,600 tourist arrivals and this year, we can see local business in tourism will be greatly devastated by covid-19. From 8 March to 20 April, we had to strictly follow the social distancing required by the Vietnam government. We just stayed at home and cannot go outside, even visit our neighbors. Local households who provide tourism services like us had no guests. We had meals and then went to sleep. That is what we did during the time of social distancing”* (Local government official). As this local government official stated, covid-19 and the strict policy of government has greatly influenced local tourism. This shows that

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<sup>6</sup> "Tourism and covid-19". [www.unwto.org](http://www.unwto.org). Retrieved 21 April 2020.

<sup>7</sup> "International visitors to Vietnam in April decline 98.2 percent year-on-year". *SGGP English Edition*. 30 April 2020. Retrieved 30 April 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Research note developed by Mark Zandi, Chief economist of Moody's

although tourism is believed to be a tool to improve well-being by a majority of local people, it is still uncertain and vulnerable. In the face of covid-19, according to the local government official, thanks to the good performance of Vietnam in combating covid-19, Viet Hai now can reopen and welcome tourists to the village. At the moment, tourism and every activity in Viet Hai are back to normal. However, there are no international tourists and only domestic tourists are going to Viet Hai at the current time as OECD states: “depending on the countries, rural regions may see increased domestic tourism from displaced international travel”.

The unpredictable situation of covid 19 at the present time seems to have a great impact on the picture of tourism development in Viet Hai. In consideration of covid-19, there are several scenarios for future tourism in Viet Hai. The first scenario is international tourists continue to be restricted in travel, decreasing the number of international tourists to Viet Hai due to travel restrictions by the Vietnam Government as well as other countries’ governments. As in the statements given earlier by a local government official, since covid-19 has widely spread, especially from 8 March, there have been no foreign tourists going to Viet Hai. Viet Hai tourism is now totally dependent on domestic tourists. Therefore, in the upcoming years, in case international tourists are still restricted to come to Viet Hai and Vietnam still shows a good performance in fighting covid-19, without doubt, local businesses derive income from serving only Vietnamese tourists.

This would be the case because when local people were asked about the dominance of tourists in Viet Hai, many of them reported that both domestic and international tourists are equally important in tourism development of the village. Thus, without international visitors, it is possible for local people to continue to engage in tourism by serving domestic guests. However, obviously, there is nothing that can make sure their income from tourism would not decline. Then, it is more likely that in the future of post covid-19, Viet Hai villagers would maintain their tourism business and at the same time, they would also do other economic activities such as farming (i.e. vegetable and fruit growing, livestock breeding) and aquaculture. For direct involvement, they will do it in their free time. In fact, the previous parts already mentioned multiple careers as one of the main features of employment in Viet Hai as well as other rural communities.



The second scenario to be considered is what if covid-19 gets worse and both international and domestic tourists would not come to the village? In this situation, it can be predicted that Viet Hai villagers would have to change their careers in order to adapt themselves to new circumstances. Tourism related jobs in the village would no longer be ideal for local people to make their lives end. Rather than tourism, local people would find more chances in urban areas. However, it might be difficult for them because once covid-19 widely spreads, it also considerably exerts influence on migrants in urban areas. Indeed, covid-19 has caused a large number of return migrants from big cities. This is the case of India at the present time. Thus, looking for a job in urban areas can hardly happen in this case. Again, returning to farming and aquaculture would likely happen, especially if there is a tendency to invest in aquaculture in the village recently. Before the impact of covid-19, there are already cases in which local villagers are no longer running their businesses as shopkeepers and accommodation providers due to the lack of tour operators. These households then return to agriculture or indirect involvement in tourism.

The result of this research also raises a question on the status of poverty in Viet Hai. Is Viet Hai still poor or not? Interviewees showed their different views on poverty in Viet Hai. Some villagers believe that Viet Hai is not poor, compared to the past and other poor regions in mountainous areas of Vietnam. In contrast, some argue that Viet Hai is still poor with low and irregular income of a majority of households. A number of interviewees show their hesitance to be recognized as a poor household, even though they believe that their income is relatively low. In other cases, interviewees consider themselves as poor but they are not listed as a poor household in the list of local government. This expresses a difference between local government and a group of local people in recognizing local poor households. In terms of poverty reduction, instead of poverty, sustainability should be the main core of local development. Interviewees frequently mentioned their vulnerable life due to high dependence on weather in agriculture and aquaculture. Viet Hai is totally different from rural areas in the mainland where local people can obtain jobs in an industrial factory and diversify their source of income. However, Viet Hai villagers do not have these options for their livelihood. As a result, tourism is seen as a necessary tool to diversify livelihood in a rural, remote area such as Viet Hai.

Furthermore, the great dependence and the essential role of tour operator as a collaborator and investor in tourism development of a remote, rural area as Viet Hai should be considered in future research. This high dependence on tour operators has both negative and positive impacts on local development. According to interviewees, they see the collaboration with tour operators as a win-win situation in which tour operators can expand their tour to Viet Hai while local people can have more chances to participate in tourism without worries about finance when they can lease their land for tour operators and get more monthly income. The great influence of outsiders in tourism development of rural areas is also seen as other rural areas in Vietnam, especially in Northern mountainous areas. But it is also necessary to consider how tour operators can take advantage of local people when their tours in Viet Hai usually last for a short time, around 3 hours.

A Dutch tourist said: “If local people in Viet Hai want to earn money from tourists, the government should not do package tours. We (tourists) all come here from a big boat that provides everything we need. Therefore, we do not need to buy anything in the village. We just spend around 30 minutes to walk around and then come back to the boat. For me and other people on the tour, we do not spend any money, even 1 dollar to buy local products” (Dutch interviewee, 2020). In the same thoughts, some researchers see the great reliance on tour operators as a weakness of rural tourism by some researchers because they create an unfair benefit distribution between local people and these tour operators. Therefore, it is necessary to have research that further examines the benefit distribution between tour operator and local people. In the scope of this research, it can be concluded that since tour operators are the most important stakeholder in tourism development of Viet Hai, we need to think about how to utilize this dependence in a positive way. Since nature-based tourism is the attractiveness of tourism in the region, the environment and nature need to be protected from the negative impacts tourism may have on local people. Therefore, tour operators should be fully aware of their great influences on other stakeholders to conserve nature and minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism in the region.

There is concern about scarcity of the young generation that is well-educated in tourism planning and management. Interviewees reveal that after graduating from university, almost all youngsters will find a

tourism-related job in Cat Ba town, Hai Phong or Quang Ninh. The issue of ageing labor force is seen in not only tourism, but also agriculture Nguyen (2019). He points out the “processes of urbanization, industrialization and globalization following reforms, rural-urban migration has become a significant social phenomenon”. In Viet Hai, apart from these reasons, interviewees gave another reason which is fewer opportunities for young people to find a tourism-related job in Viet Hai. This raises the question of why tourism is developing in the region, but youngsters have to go to other regions to work. It was explained by interviewees because of the household-established entrepreneurs in Viet Hai, which is also a typical characteristic of tourism in many rural regions. In other words, in rural areas, small-scale business, mostly using labor in the family. In addition, the number of local businesses in Viet Hai is still small and some of them have just recently begun operations. Thus, the local government should focus more on policies that can attract these local young generations to work in local business, which I believe that it can help to build a sustainable development for tourism of Viet Hai in the future.

Research exposes the important role of local government in managing, regulating and supporting local people to participate in tourism in general, and the CBT program in particular. The CBT program is considered as an ineffective program by most of interviewees because it has an unrealistic target and weak regulation of government while there is a low direct participation in tourism in the region. The research also raises further questions on how to integrate the expectation of local government to the CBT policy and what local residents want from CBT.

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## Abstract in Korean

이 연구는 베트남의 외판 시골 공동체인 비엠타이 지역의 관광 활동과 농촌 개발(rural development)에 대한 지역적 관여를 조사한다. 본 논문은 다른 연구만큼 관광 계획에 대한 지역사회 참여를 탐구하기보다는 농촌의 발전과 농촌의 변혁 과정을 고려해 관광고용에 대한 마을참여에 초점을 맞추고 있다. 정성적 연구방법은 아카이브 연구와 마을 직접 참여자 관찰로 구성됐으며, 총 40 명을 심층 현지 인터뷰가 진행됐으며, 촌민 32 명, 관계자 3 명, 관광객 5 명 등이었다. 조사 결과는 다음과 같은 두 가지 주요 결과로 나타난다.

첫째로, 일반적으로 지방 촌민은 직접 가입, 간접 가입, 불가입의 세 가지 형태로 관광 활동에 참여하고 있다. 관광이 20 년동안 발전했지만 숙소·교통 등 관광객을 위한 서비스를 직접 제공하기 때문에 직접 가입하는 촌민과 지역 가구는 극소수에 불과하다는 평가를 받고 있다. 이들 직접 관련된 가구는 지역 관광 사업을 함께 모아 서로 지원하도록 유도하기 위해 설립된 공동체 기반 관광 프로그램의 일원이다. 비엠타이의 대다수의 현지인들과 현지 가정들은 관광 활동에 간접적이고 무관심하게 참여하는데, 이는 비엠타이의 관광 고용에 대한 낮은 참여도를 반영한다. 가족 및 친족 네트워크(내부 소셜 네트워크와 관련) 형태의 지리적 행위 공간(외부 소셜 네트워크 참조)과 사회적 자본의 결합(내부 소셜 네트워크와 관련됨)의 차이는 지역 주민의 대다수가 관광 활동에 참여하는 것을 막는 결정적인 요인이 될 가능성이 높다.

둘째, 관광은 지역 발전에 재정적, 비재무적 이익을 모두 제공함으로써 농촌의 변화 과정에서 농촌의 직업, 농촌의 소득을 다양화하는 관광의 역할을 부각시키고 있다. 그러나 관광개발의 혜택은 지역 마을 주민들 사이에 확연히 분포되어 있어 마을 내 각 집단 간의 생활수준의 불균형이 초래되고 있다. 대부분의 혜택은 홈스테이 (homestay), 레스토랑, 교통 서비스 등 자체 사업을 운영해 관광 활동에 직접 참여하는 가족들에게 돌아간다. 한편 관광 활동을 하지 않거나 간접적으로 관광에 참여하지 않는 지역 주민들은 지속할 수 없는 수입원, 저축 부족, 지리적인 고립 등으로 인해 더 많은 취약성을 경험하게 된다. 이러한 결과는 비엠타이와 다른

개발도상국들의 농촌 지역에서의 포괄적 발전에 대한 우려를 불러일으킨다.

*키워드:* 농촌 관광, 지방 개발, 농촌 변화, 커뮤니티 기반 관광(CBT), 지리적 공간, 결속적 사회자본, 친족(친척)

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Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, my parents and my younger brother for supporting me throughout my life.

# Appendixes

## Appendix 1

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL VILLAGERS

**Interview form: local people (L)**

**No: L...**

**Date:...../...../20.....**

#### **Village involvement in the tourism-rural development nexus: a case study of Viet Hai, Vietnam**

*This study is a study of tourism and local development in Viet Hai village, Vietnam. You are asked to participate in this study because you are living in Viet Hai. This study is conducted by Dinh Thi Le Thu, a Master's student of Department of Geography, Seoul National University, South Korea.*

*This study will be conducted only for those who voluntarily participate. If you have any questions, the researcher will explain in detail. I promise that all of your private information will be used only for the purpose of this research.*

*Thank you very much for your participation!*

#### **Part A- Basic information**

**A-1.** Gender:.....

**A-2.** Age:.....

**A-3.** Education level:.....

**A-4.** Household size:.....

**A-5.** Period of living:.....

**A-6.** Are you an indigenous villager or not?

- If not:

a. Where is your hometown?

.....

b..Why do you move to Viet Hai?

.....

**A-7.** Main occupation: .....

**A-8.** Are you (your household) doing any tourism-related job?

+ If yes, use B-1

+ If no, use B-2

**A-9.** Is your household a member of CBT?

+ If *Yes*, move to questions in part *B-1 and part C*.

+ If *No*, move to questions in part *B-2 and part C*.

## **Part B. Involvement in tourism and contribution of tourism**

### **B-1 (case 1): Tourism-related job and CBT member (Interviewee answer “yes” for question A-8 and A-9)**

#### **B-1-1. Involvement in tourism**

- **B-1-1.1.** What kind of tourism-related job are you (your household) doing? Can you describe that your job (your household’s business)? Which tourism service do your household provide?
- **B-1-1.2.** How long have you (your household) been doing your job/ business?
- **B-1-1.3.** Why do you (your household) decide to do your current job in tourism?
- **B-1-1.4.** Do you (your family) do it regularly?
- **B-1-1.5.** What kind of difficulties do you (your household) have to deal with in your job/ business?
- **B-1-1.6.** Do you (your household) receive any aids/assistance from government to start and operate your business
- **B-1-1.7.** Do you (your household) have a lot of free time?
- **B-1-1.8.** Apart from this job, do you (your household) do any other jobs?
- **B-1-1.9.** Before doing this tourism-related job, what was your (household) occupation?
- **B-1-1.10.** Can you estimate the percentage/ number of local people (local household) who are doing tourism-related job as you (your household)? Is it much different from the past?
- **B-1-1.11.** Will you (your household) continue to keep doing your current job/ business?

#### **B-1-2. Contribution of tourism**

- **B-1-2-1.** How much has tourism changed your life and your household?
- **B1-2-2.** What benefit do you (your household) gain from tourism?

##### *a. Financial benefit:*

a-1. Can you estimate your ((your household) monthly income? (national poverty line = 700,000 VND; national near poverty line is at 900,000 VND)

a-2. Is tourism the main source of income? Why?

a-3. Do tourists spend much on service that your household provide?



a-4. Your household can earn much from which service that you provide?

b. *Non – financial benefit*: (e.g. Do you think you have improved any personal skills or knowledge since you get engaged in tourism activities?)

**B-2 (case 2): Non tourism-related job (Interviewee answer “no” for question A-8)**

**B-2-1. Involvement in tourism**

- **B-2-1.1.** What is your (household) current job?
- **B-2-1.2.** How long have you (household) been working at your current jobs?
- **B-2-1.3.** What is your (your household) estimated monthly income?
- **B-2-1.4.** What is the main source of income?
- **B-2-1.5.** Why don't you (your household) do tourism related jobs?
- **B-2-1.6.** Do you (your household) want to or have any plan to get engaged in tourism (or start a business) in the future? Why?

**B-2-2. Contribution of tourism**

- **B-2-2-1.** Do you think you receive any benefit from tourism?
- **B-2-2-2.** If yes, please clarify and give reasons
- **B-2-2-3.** If no, please give reasons

**Part C: Other questions**

**C-1. Characteristics of tourism in Viet Hai**

- **C-1-1.** How long has tourism developed in Viet Hai?
- **C-1-2.** In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of Viet Hai to develop tourism? (in consideration of remote location of Viet Hai)
- **C-1-3.** When is the peak season of tourism in Viet Hai?
- **C-1-4.** What kind of activities tourists usually do in Viet Hai?
- **C-1-5.** Package tour and independent travel, which do you think is more popular in Viet Hai?
- **C-1-6.** Do you think tourism in Viet Hai is undergoing an upward progress? Why?

**C-2. Local involvement in tourism**

- **C-2-1.** How many local people/ local households are engaged in tourism activities at present time?
- **C-2-2.** How many local people/ local households were engaged in tourism activities in the past? (20 years ago)
- **C-2-3.** Before starting get engaged in tourism, what did local people do to meet basic needs?

- **C-2-4.** What kind of jobs related to tourism are existing in Viet Hai?  
- If not tourism, what do local people usually do for living?
- **C-3. Tourism and local development**
- **C-3-1.** How has tourism changed Viet Hai villagers, in your opinion? In positive or negative way?
  - a. Economic change (income, occupation, infrastructure, etc.)
  - b. Non-economic change
- **C-3-2.** How do you define poverty?
- **C-3-3.** Do you think tourism has contributed to poverty reduction in Viet Hai? Why?
- **C-3-4.** Do you think Viet Hai villagers are still poor? Why?
- **C-3-5.** Who do you think can gain most benefits from tourism development in the village? Why?
- **C-3-6.** Do you see a (huge) difference in life quality between household who get engaged in tourism and who do not get involved in tourism? Why?
- **C-3-7.** Do you have any concern over development of tourism in Viet Hai? Why?
- **C-4. Policies**
- **C-4-1.** Can you name any tourism related policies and its content that
- **C-4-2.** Can you name any NGOs that have program to support Viet Hai villager in tourism?
- **C-4-3.** What do you know about CBT program?
- **C-4-4.** Is your household a member of CBT?
- **C-4-5.** How do the local government inform CBT and other policies to local people? (TV, social media, local speaker, etc.)
- **C-4-6.** How do these policies impact on tourism in the village?
- **C-4-7.** Do you think CBT (and other policies) are effective? Why?
- **C-4-8.** In your opinion, do you think tourism will continue to develop in upcoming time? What do governments should focus on to develop tourism in Viet Hai in the future?

**Thank you very much!**

**Appendix 2**  
**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL**  
**GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL AND LOCAL LEADER**

**Interview form: local government and local leader (G)**

**No: G...**

**Date:...../...../20.....**

**Village involvement in the tourism-rural development nexus:**  
**a case study of Viet Hai, Vietnam**

*This study is a study of tourism and local development in Viet Hai village, Vietnam. You are asked to participate in this study because you are a local official in Viet Hai. This study is conducted by Dinh Thi Le Thu, a Master's student of Department of Geography, Seoul National University, South Korea.*

*This study will be conducted only for those who voluntarily participate. If you have any questions, the researcher will explain in detail. I promise that all of your private information will be used only for the purpose of this research.*

*Thank you very much for your participation!*

**A. Basic information**

**A-1. Gender:**

**A-2. Age:**

**A-3. Position:**

**A-4. How long have you been in your current position?**

**B. Tourism, tourism involvement and local development in Viet Hai**

**B-1. Characteristics of tourism in Viet Hai**

- **B-1-1.** How long has tourism developed in Viet Hai?
- **B-1-2.** In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of Viet Hai to develop tourism? (in consideration of remote location of Viet Hai)
- **B-1-3.** When is the peak season of tourism in Viet Hai?

- **B-1-4.** What kind of activities tourists usually do in Viet Hai?
- **B-1-5.** Package tour and independent travel, which do you think is more popular in Viet Hai?
- **B-1-6.** Do you think tourism in Viet Hai is undergoing an upward progress? Why?
- **B-1-7.** What do you think about the role of tour operators and outside investors in tourism development in Viet Hai?

### **B-2. Local involvement in tourism**

- **B-2-1.** How many local people/ local households are engaged in tourism activities at present time?
- **B-2-2.** How many local people/ local households were engaged in tourism activities in the past? (20 years ago)
- **B-2-3.** Before starting get engaged in tourism, what did local people do to meet basic needs?
- **B-2-4.** What kind of jobs related to tourism are existing in Viet Hai?  
- If not tourism, what do local people usually do for living?

### **B-3. Tourism and local development**

- **B-3-1.** How has tourism changed Viet Hai villagers' lives, in your opinion? In positive or negative way?
  - a. Economic change (income, occupation, infrastructure, etc.)
  - b. Non-economic change
- **B-3-2.** How does government measure poverty?
- **B-3-3.** Do you think tourism has contributed to poverty reduction in Viet Hai? Why?
- **B-3-4.** How many poor households in Viet Hai at present time?
- **B-3-5.** Is Viet Hai on the list of poor regions according to national criteria?
- **B-3-6.** Who do you think can gain most benefits from tourism development in the village? Why?
- **B-3-7.** Do you see a (huge) difference in life quality between household who get engaged in tourism and who do not get involved in tourism? Why?

### **C. Policies**

- **C-1.** At present time, is tourism the priority in the policies that aim to reduce poverty, improve life quality of local people in Viet Hai?
- **C-2.** Can you list and briefly introduce some typical plans or projects of tourism in Viet Hai? (Name, main objective, poverty component or not?) (include CBT)

- **C-3.** What do you think about the success of these policies (include CBT) and projects?
- **C-4.** Who are the most beneficiaries in these policies and projects?
- **C-5.** How does local government inform tourism policies to local people in Viet Hai?
- **C-6.** Do you think local people consider these are positive policies?
- **C-7.** Does local government usually organize meetings and tourism related meetings with local people? What were the main topics during these meetings?
- **C-8.** Can you name any NGOs that have their program to support tourism development Viet Hai? What do you think about the role of these NGOs in tourism development of Viet Hai?
- **C-9.** What are the future plans on tourism development in Viet Hai? (year, main core, main objectives)
- **C-10.** What are the barriers in the process of decision making, planning and implementation of the tourism policies in Viet Hai?
- **C-11.** In your opinion, what do local people should do to develop tourism in Viet Hai?

**Thank you very much!**

### Appendix 3

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TOURISTS

**Interview form: Tourist (T)**

**No: T...**

**Date:...../...../20.....**

### **Village involvement in the tourism-rural development nexus: a case study of Viet Hai, Vietnam**

*This study is a study of tourism and local development in Viet Hai village, Vietnam. You are asked to participate in this study because you are visiting Viet Hai as a tourist. This study is conducted by Dinh Thi Le Thu, a Master's student of Department of Geography, Seoul National University, South Korea.*

*This study will be conducted only for those who voluntarily participate. If you have any questions, the researcher will explain in detail. I promise that all of your private information will be used only for the purpose of this research.*

*Thank you very much for your participation!*

#### **Part A- Basic information**

**A-1.** Gender: .....

**A-2.** Age: .....

**A-3.** Occupation: .....

**A-4.** Nationality:  
.....

#### **Part B. Tourism related questions**

**B-1.** You visit Viet Hai in follow a package tour or independent travel?  
If it is package tour, which tourism company? How did you know that company?

**B-2.** Is this your first time in Viet Hai village?

**B-3.** Do you travel here alone or with others?

**B-4.** How long will you stay here?

**B-5.** Where are you staying? (hotel, hostel, homestays, etc.)

- How did you find your accommodation and why you (don't) stay in Viet Hai?
- B-6.** How did you know Viet Hai as a tourist attraction? (through social media, friends, tourism company, etc.)
- B-7.** How do you feel about tourism and tourism services in Viet Hai?
  - **B-7-1.** To what extent do you like? What do you like most? Why?
  - **B-7-2.** To what extent don't you like? What don't you like most? Why?
- B-8.** How do you spend your money in tourism in Viet Hai?
  - **B-8-1.** For local food in local restaurant?
  - **B-8-2.** For accommodation?
  - **B-8-3.** For entertainment activities?
  - **B-8-4.** For souvenir and handicraft products?
  - **B-8-4.** For other service
- B-9.** Do you want to come back here next time?
- B-10.** Do you have any recommendation for tourism services in Viet Hai?
- B-11.** What should be done to improve tourism service in the village in your opinion?

**Thank you very much!**

**Appendix 4**  
**SET OF 19 CRITERIA ON NONG THON MOI**  
**(WITH 39 SPECIFIC INDICATORS)**

<b>No</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Contents</b>
1	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning on land use and infrastructure to develop agriculture, industry and services</li> <li>- Planning on development of technical, social and environmental infrastructure</li> <li>- Planning on new residential areas and embellishment of existing residential areas toward civilization, preserving a good cultural identity</li> </ul>
2	Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renovate, upgrade and expand the rural electricity system</li> <li>- Percentage of the main commune/ village roads are concreted in accordance with the technical standard of Ministry of Transportation</li> <li>- Percentage of village lanes which are clean and non- muddy in rain season</li> <li>- Percentage of main interior field lanes are concreted and convenient for transportation</li> </ul>
3	Irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irrigation system basically meets production and living demand</li> <li>- Percentage of canals managed by commune level are concreted</li> </ul>
4	Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Electricity system meets the technical standard of the electricity industry</li> <li>- Percentage of households which usually and safely use electricity from various sources</li> </ul>
5	School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of schools at different levels: preschool, nursery school, primary school, secondary school having infrastructure which meet national standard</li> </ul>
6	Cultural infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultural house and sport centre of commune MS of Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism</li> <li>- Percentage of villages having Cultural house and sport centre MS of Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism</li> </ul>
7	Rural market place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Market meets the standard of Ministry of Construction</li> </ul>



8	Post office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commune having office for postal service and telecommunication</li> <li>- Village having internet connection</li> </ul>
9	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of temporary and dilapidated house</li> <li>- Percentage of households having houses that MS of Ministry of Construction</li> </ul>
10	Income	Average income per capital/year in comparison with the average figure of the province
11	Poor household	Percentage of poor households
12	Labor structure	Percentage of labour within working age working in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture
13	Forms of production	Commune having effective collaboration group or cooperative
14	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compulsory secondary education</li> <li>- Percentage of secondary school graduate continue studying at high school, vocational school and continuation school</li> <li>- Percentage of trained labour</li> </ul>
15	Health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of people participate in different forms of health insurance</li> <li>- Commune health center meets the national standard</li> </ul>
16	Culture	- Commune having over 70% of villages that meet the cultural village standard in accordance with the regulations of Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism
17	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of households using safe water in accordance with the national standard</li> <li>- Production and business facilities meet the environmental standard</li> <li>- There is no activity that causes environmental damage but there are activities to improve the environment</li> <li>- Commune cemetery is built under planning</li> <li>- Waste and sewage is collected and placed under treatment</li> </ul>
18	Strong political - social system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commune officers MS</li> <li>- Commune having all grassroots political institutions in accordance with regulations</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Communist Party committee and commune authorities meet the “strong and transparent” criterion</li> <li>- All political institutions of the commune achieve at least “hard-working” title</li> </ul>
19	Social security and order	- Social security and order is ensured and strengthened

**Source: Nguyen (2013)**

## Appendix 5

### MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY IN VIETNAM INDEX (MPI-VN)

On November 19th, 2015, Resolution No.59, which was approved by Prime Minister about the promulgation a new MPI-VN line applied for the period of 2016 - 2020. At the same time, all localities will apply MPI-VN from January 1st, 2016. MPI-VN is established by MOLISA. This MPI-VN comprises both income and basic needs.

- Income criteria: Poverty line is 700,000 VND (~30 USD)/ person / month in rural areas and 900,000 VND (~38.6 USD) / person / month in urban areas.

- 5 dimensions and 10 indicators are given in following table:

**MPI-VN Dimensions and Indicators**

Dimensions	Indicators	Level of deprivation	Legal basis
Education	Adult education level	At least one adult above 15 years of age was born in 1986 onward has not completed secondary education	Revised Constitution 2013 Resolution 15-NQ/TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020 Resolution 41/2000/QH (implemented by Decree 88/2001/NĐ-CP)
	Child school attendance	Any child aged between 5 – 14 years old is not attending school.	Revised Constitution 2013 Law on education 2005. Law on protection, Car/Truck (s)e and education of children Resolution 15-NQ/TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020

Health	Access to health care	ill during the last 12 months but did not meet doctors (illness here is identified as a serious condition in which person is not able to move and need others' care; or person has to be absent at work and is not able to do normal activities.	Revised Constitution 2013 Law on treatment 2011
	Health insurance	At least one member aged 6 years or older do not have healthcare insurance.	Revised Constitution 2013 Law on health insurance 2011 Resolution 15-NQ/TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020
Housing	Housing condition	The household which are living in non-durable house or a simple house.	Law on House 2014. Resolution 15-NQ/TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020
	Housing space per person	The average floor area per person is less than 8m-sq	Law on House 2014. Decision No. 2127 / QĐ-Ttg of the Prime Minister Approving the National Housing Development Strategy to 2020 and vision to 2030

Clean water and sanitation	Clean water	The household does not have access to safe water	Resolution 15/NQ-TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020
	Sanitation	The household does not access hygienic toilet.	Resolution 15/NQ-TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020
Information	Accessibility to Communication Services	The household has no member who own a mobile or internet.	Law on telecommunication 2009. Resolution 15/NQ-TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020
	Accessibility to Information.	The household does not access one of these assets: TV, radio or computer/laptop and is not able to listen to loudspeaker of village.	Law on communication information 2015. Resolution 15/NQ-TW Social policies during the period 2012 – 2020

**A household in rural area is recognized as poor if:**

- Having an average income per capita not greater than 700,000 VND (30 USD) per month; OR:

- Having a per capita income per month of more than 700,000 VND (30 USD) to 1,000,000 VND (43 USD) and a deficiency of three indicators measuring the level of access to basic social services or higher

**A household in urban area is poor if:**

- Having an income per capita not greater than 900,000 VND (38.6 USD) per month; OR:

- Having a per capita income per month of more than 900,000 VND (~38.6 USD) to 1,300,000 VND (~55.8 USD) and a deficiency of 03 indicators measuring the level of access to basic social services or higher.